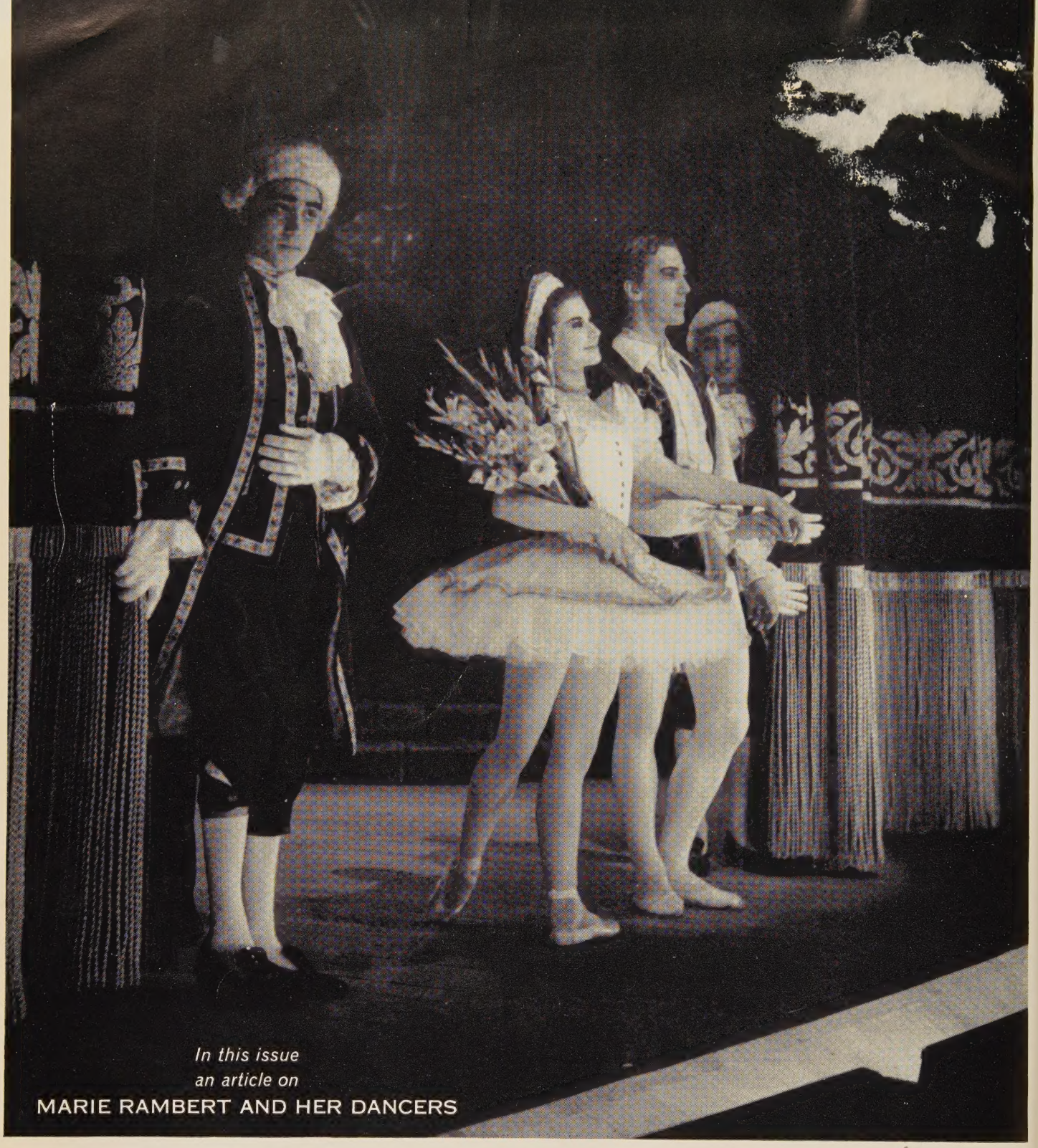
his issue:– First reviews of the Kirov season in London

JULY 1961
TWO SHILLINGS

Ballet TODAY

Stars appearing in the Midlands Festival of Ballet to be held at Coventry during July.



In this issue
an article on
MARIE RAMBERT AND HER DANCERS

In This Issue

No. 6 VOL. 13

Lucette Aldous and Kenneth Bannerman take a curtain call during the Company's successful season at the Manoel Theatre, Malta, December 1960.

3 EDITOR'S LOG
5 NEWS
6 LONDON REVIEWS
12 THE RAMBERT COMPANY
14 THE DANCING WORLD
23 NEW RECORDINGS
24 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
25 BALLET AROUND THE WORLD

PROGRAMMES FOR THE MONTH APPEAR ON PAGE 10

Opposite (left to right): **John Collins, theatre manager of the Royal Opera House, Inna Zubkovskaya, ballerina, and Konstantin Sergeyev, principal choreographer, of the Kirov Ballet.**

Above: **Princess Margaret and her husband Mr. Antony Armstrong-Jones talk to the Russians and sample the ice cream gateau, which measured two feet in diameter and was made for the reception which followed the first night of the Kirov season in London**

BALLET TODAY
EDITED and Published by
ESTELLE HERF

editor's log

ALTHOUGH I know that balletomanes in the Midlands, and the North, are fiercely proud of their cultural awareness, I again use my *Log* this month to remind them of the Midlands Festival of Ballet which takes place in Coventry from 11th - 15th July. As you will remember I reported last month that this event is sponsored by the A.B.C. Television Company, who already contribute £20,000 a year to the arts. So flock to this event and show your appreciation of their interest in ballet. With Carla Fracci, Rosella Hightower, Natalie Krassovska, Colette Marchand, Margarethe Schanne, Anton Dolin, John Gilpin, Milorad Miskovitch, Kjeld Noack and André Prokovsky dancing some entirely new items, as well as old favourites in their repertoire, it can hardly be considered in the nature of a chore for you to attend, and you should not need a second asking.

COVER PHOTOS

From left to right around the cover:
Carla Fracci, Margarethe Schanne, Colette Marchand, André Prokovsky, Natalie Krassovska, Kjeld Noack, Milorad Miskovitch, John Gilpin
Centre page: Rosella Hightower

Why not use the cover page to get a "round robin" of the stars' autographs. I have been promised they will sign under their individual photographs for you.

AT THE opening of the Kirov season in London standing in the foyer of the Royal Opera House you could have closed your eyes and easily imagined you were in an air terminal, so many people were arriving from so many parts of the world. Within the space of a few moments I saw Robert Helpmann and Peggy van Praagh (from Australia) Natalie Krassovska, John Martin New York Times critic (from America), Beryl Grey who had just returned after dancing in Munich, Noel Goodwin, Daily Express critic, returned from Leningrad after covering the Royal Ballet's appearances in that city, and many others. One thing is quite certain, everybody who could get to the opening did so. Everywhere you looked there were dancers, choreographers, teachers and critics. John Gilpin with his wife Sally (I am glad to report that John has recovered from his troublesome back injury), Anton Dolin, who is very busy mustering stars from all over the world for his Festival of Ballet in Coventry mid-July, Madame Rambert in the thick of preparations for her own Company's London season, and other famous personalities too numerous to mention here, and of course the regular glamorous first nighters such as Vivien Leigh. After the show there was a reception in the Crush Bar, the guests included Princess Margaret and Mr. Antony Armstrong-Jones, seen in our picture above.

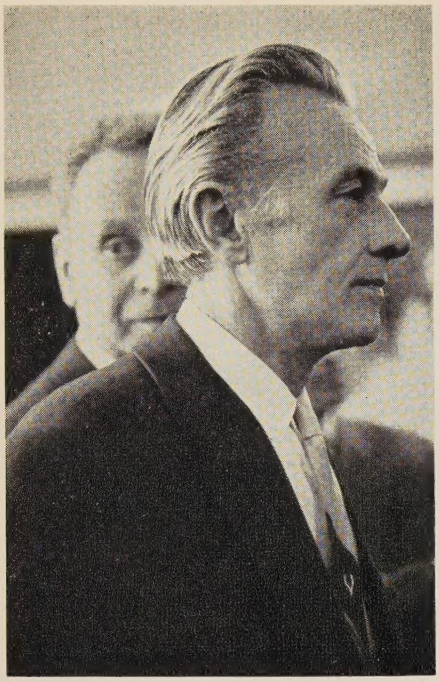
PLEASE NOTE

Our next issue is a combined one and will be published on 10th August

VISITING Paris last year, Dr. Julian Braunsweg Director General of London's Festival Ballet met and talked with famous Soviet choreographer Vladimir Bourmeister, in the French capital to stage a production of *Swan Lake* at the Opéra. Asked if he would consider creating a new ballet for Dr. Braunsweg's Company, if possible to music by Tchaikovsky, Bourmeister readily agreed saying that for long he had been considering a ballet based on the Ostrovsky drama "Spring Tale", which, when staged in Moscow in 1873, had incidental music by the great composer.

"But I have no idea where the music is now" said Bourmeister, "if you can find it I will write a ballet to it".

And so the idea was born, but very few people except those immediately involved realise what it takes to bring such a project to life. Mr. Benn Toff, administrator of Festival Ballet obtained permission to search for the music in the archives of the Bolshoi Theatre, and left for Moscow. With the aid of Nina Karasyova, *Ballet Today's* correspondent in that city, Tchaikovsky's original score was found and copied out by hand for Mr. Toff. The Soviet Government Ministry of Culture made the services of Vladimir Bourmeister available for the libretto and choreography of the new ballet, for which he chose the title *Snow Maiden*, and Mr. Yuri Piminov, Honoured Art Worker of the USSR, twice a Stalin prize winner, agreed to design the decor and costumes in collaboration with Mr. Gennady Epishin, who was awarded a Silver Medal by the Fine Arts Academy for the best graphic work of 1960.



Left (Foreground):
Vladimir Bourmeister in London
Background: Yuri Piminov
Photo: Houston Rogers

Right: Julia Farron in the Neopolitan dance see
" Carry-on at the Garden " page 5

Although in due course we heard that Mr. Bourmeister had joined Festival Ballet on tour to commence rehearsals, it was not until the Company, en route for Naples on the second part of their tour, stopped off for a press party at the Royal Festival Hall in May, that at least for we hardened sceptics in London, the idea became a reality.

Sipping " Snow Maiden " cocktails specially created for the occasion, and to the strains of the little known Tchaikovsky music for the ballet, we were able to see the delightful miniature sets for Acts 1 and 3, built by the workmen of the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow. Alicia Markova in a speech of welcome introduced us to Mr. Bourmeister who was accompanied by his vivacious wife, and two colleagues Yuri Piminov and Gennady Epishin.

But for the dancers of the Company of course things had begun to take shape much earlier, and those who were present at the reception in London spoke to me of their gratitude for the opportunity to work under such a great choreographer, and their enthusiasm for the ballet itself. Oleg Briansky who is expected to open the season with Belinda Wright when the ballet is premièred at the Royal Festival Hall London in July, told me that the story and music are so moving that no-one would be able to dance the leading roles too frequently, the emotional strain would be too great. In fact four different casts will be seen throughout the season.

With the Leningrad Ballet finishing their season at Covent Garden on the 15th July, and Festival Ballet opening with *Snow Maiden* at Royal Festival Hall two days later, balletomanes have never had it so good. In addition a Soviet Ballet Exhibition is to be staged in the Ceremonial Foyer of the Royal Festival Hall during the nine weeks summer season of Festival Ballet.

IN ADDITION to all this welter of cultural exchange between Russia and our own country, another important event will soon be upon us. The Ballet Rambert annual summer season at Sadler's Wells commencing the 18th July.

On the opening night the Company will present the first British production of Balanchine's ballet *Night Shadow,* which has been specially prepared by John Taras who has spent two weeks rehearsing the Company in this country. Decor will be by Miss Alix Stone.

Another new ballet, *A Place in the Desert,* will be presented by the Company's principal choreographer—Norman Morrice, set to music by Carlos Surinach with sets by Ralph Koltai. Walter Gore is to reproduce his ballet *Night and Silence,* which he did for the Edinburgh Festival in 1958, and a revival of *Winter Night,* with Paula Hinton as guest artist.

For further details see *Programmes for the Month* elsewhere in this issue.

For Whom the Bell Tolls

PRESENTING myself at the stage door of the Lyric Theatre in Shaftesbury Avenue I was met by an adamant doorkeeper. " No-one ", he said, " would be allowed in to-day. He had already telephoned the stage manager and those were his instructions, several other people had been turned away ".

However I had my invitation from the Royal Academy of Dancing to attend an audition in the theatre on that day, and I was prepared to wait until someone, somewhere, would say the magic words. As always, if one does not give up too easily, they came, and making my way through the labyrinth backstage I wondered how many loving mums and teachers had been amongst those who had been more easily put off.

There are so many glamorous stories woven around the word audition, but there is little truth in them. I should not, for instance, like to be number one soloist, with Dame Margot, Michael Somes, Miss Phyllis Bedells, Madame Baronova and Miss Mona Inglesby sitting up there in the judges circle.

And anxiety does not diminish with each succeeding candidate. Number 1 did well, and so did Number 5, can I do better than this? Convinced that the dance arranged specially for her by her teacher was all a ghastly mistake, and that she should not be there at all, the next contestant makes her entrance on stage to the tinkling strains of a piano.

The judges confer after each solo, and Michael Somes rings a handbell to summon the next contestant. What does the trembling candidate conjecture backstage after her exit? Was it a good or bad sign that the judges took such a short time to make up their minds in her case?

At last all eighteen have made their brief appearance, and soon the bell tolls again for the selected finalists. Rehearsals have been held all morning and the solos and class have by now taken up almost two hours, so that everyone is pretty well exhausted, but numbers 1, 5, 12 and 17 go through their paces again. Another conference up in the circle and Michael Somes makes his way to the stage. This is it. He is merciful, keeps preliminaries short and announces Number 5, Miss Hilary Debden-Wilkins from Auckland, New Zealand the winner,* Neil Fitzwilliam, the only male candidate, runner-up. The dewy-eyed winner is surrounded by the other seventeen young people who are training to become professional dancers. We all hoped that one day she would make her exit to the thunderous applause of an enthusiastic audience, but probably nothing will give her the thrill and satisfaction that this one did.

Dame Adeline Genée, in whose name the scholarship is awarded, and who has again this year generously added another thousand pounds to the funds, was well pleased with the result, and indeed there was no doubt that the decision was a right and fair one. Once again I left marvelling at the way Dame Margot organises her life. I had only just completed an article on her triumphant tour of Japan and the Far East and before I could get it into the hands of the printers here she was, in London, giving her precious time, with infinite patience, to the welfare of young dancers.

* *Also see Fernau Hall's review of the Royal Ballet School Show* London Reviews *this issue.*

News from here and there

CARRY-ON AT THE GARDEN

IT WAS obvious that neither of them had seen *Swan Lake* before. But with masculine superiority he tried to keep his companion in the picture, with some highly original comments on the performance.

All went well until Act III and Julia Farron took the stage for the Neopolitan dance. Before she as much as lifted a foot tumultous applause rang out, and when she had finished the audience really let fly.

"Whatever are they carrying on like that for ?" said our new balletgoer. Nonplussed, her mentor did some quick thinking. "Well I suppose they must be two young people coming up and the ballet world knows it", he said.

But if our two friends did not know that this was Julia's farewell appearance at the Garden, everyone else did.* Again and again her partner, Alexander Grant, brought her forward, but the audience would not let her go. That hardworked phrase "she stopped the show" was never so literally true. And finally, because it was obvious that the audience intended to keep up their frenzied clapping and shouting of bravos, Julia had to go off stage. Surely no artist ever had a better send-off, or more richly deserved it.

** We reported in last month's issue that Miss Farron is retiring from the Royal Ballet, but will appear with the Company in Russia.*

NEW BALLET BY ANDRÉE HOWARD

The Masque Ballet Club presents four one-act ballets at the Emma Conns Theatre, Morley College, London, on Saturday evening, 22nd July at 8.0 p.m. The programme consists of *The Succuba* choreography by Bridget Kelly-Espinosa, *Catharsis* a new ballet by Andrée Howard, *The Lark Ascending* by Leo Kersley (in which the choreographer will appear himself) and a revival of *The Whims of Cupid and the Ballet Master* by Vincenzo Galeotti. Tickets and information from Allan Grinsted, 31 St. Catherine's Court, London, W.4.

HINTLESHAM FESTIVAL

The eleventh summer Festival of the Arts will be held at Hintlesham Hall this year from the 14th to the 30th July. Sir Robert Adeane, Trustee of the Tate Gallery, will open the festival which is to include an exhibition of paintings by East Anglian and London artists, Suffolk crafts, and a display of children's paintings and drawings selected from recent entries in Anglia Television's "Afternoon Club".

Opera performances will take place on 20th - 22nd July, ballet 28th and 29th July. Proceeds will be devoted to the Pestalozzie Children's Village, in Sussex.

COMMONWEALTH ARTS FESTIVAL

The formation of a Commonwealth Arts Society has been announced by Mr. Ian Hunter, who is to be Director-General. Chairman of the Society is Lord Balfour of Inchrye and many well-known people have accepted invitations to become Directors or serve on the Advisory Council. To promote the Festival which will take place in the United Kingdom in 1964, a non-profit making Company has been formed under the name of the Commonwealth Arts Festival Society Limited.

FILM OF ELSSLER'S LIFE

Jack Carter is to choreograph a film on the life of Fanny Elssler. Olga Ferri is to take the part of Fanny with Norman McDowell as her partner, Stühlmuller, and it is hoped that Markova will be able to appear as Taglioni. There will be four extracts from Elssler's ballets, including Elssler in *Le Diable Boiteux* and *La Jolie Fille de Gand,* and Taglioni in her famous ballet *La Fille du Danube.* Both Elssler and Taglioni will dance in *La Sylphide.* Assisted by Cyril Beaumont in the necessary research, Mr. Carter has found some very interesting original music at the British Museum, and Schneitzhoeffer's music for *La Sylphide* will be used, not the later Danish version as used by Madame Rambert.

The film is a German-Belgian co-production and will be released later this year.

Mr. Carter certainly keeps busy. In March his ballet *The Disenchanted* (music Concerto for Piano, Trumpet and Strings by Shostakovitch, decor and costumes by Norman McDowell) was premièred by the Amsterdam Ballet in Amsterdam, and in April three of the eight items given in a recital of ballet by the Solisten Ballet in Antwerp were choreographed by him, with Norman McDowell dancing in all three.

DANCE MERGER

Sandra Short, 21-year-old dancer with the Ballet Rambert, married 21-year-old John Frost, a dancer at the London Palladium at St. Lukes Church Kew Gardens on 5th June. As Ballet Rambert were rehearsing for their London season there will be no honeymoon, yet.

BAALBECK FESTIVAL

The Royal Ballet will take part in the Fifth Baalbeck Festival in the Lebanon. The Company will include Margot Fonteyn, Lynn Seymour, Elizabeth Anderton, Doreen Wells, Audrey Farriss, David Blair, Donald Britton, Desmond Doyle and Alexander Bennett. There will be two programmes: On August 29th and 31st *Les Rendezvous, La Péri, Swan Lake* Act III ; on August 30th and September 1st *Danses Concertantes, Swan Lake* Act II, *Don Quixote* pas de deux, and *Les Patineurs.*

CANADA

The National Ballet Guild of Canada concluded its Tenth Anniversary season with a ($10,099) record box office in Pittsburgh, May 14th. Their television production of Cranko's *Pineapple Poll* is to inaugurate the International Hour on five CBS stations in U.S.A. Two other programmes are to be seen on the series from Canada, several from the BBC, the Australian Broadcasting Corpn. and Italy. Lilian Jarvis, Lawrence Adams and Patrick Hurde (formerly of the Royal Ballet) are the leads.

Galina Samtsova, a soloist from the Kiev Ballet, now married to a Canadian and living in Toronto, has signed as a soloist with the National Ballet of Canada and will appear next season. Negotiations have been concluded and a ballet by George Balanchine will be added to the repertoire. During his visit to Toronto Ray Powell rehearsed the company in his ballet *One in Five,* also to be added to next season's repertoire.

BUDAPEST

A new ballet based on Liszt's second Hungarian Rhapsody has had its first performance in Budapest's Madách Theatre. Choreography is by István Moinár.

JOHANNESBURG

The newly formed Johannesburg Ballet Company is reported to have started a branch in Pretoria and will shortly perform a programme of three short ballets there.

Frank Staff, who was to have returned to Europe in October, is now remaining in South Africa as his wife, a well-known stage personality in South Africa, Heather Lloyd-Jones, is expecting a baby.

PARIS

Claude Bessy, star of the Opéra has just published a children's book about the dance, published by Hachette.

Ludmilla Tcherina is to be the star of *La Femme,* a ballet to be staged in Venice in July, designed by Salvador Dali and directed by Maurice Béjart.

Roland Petit and Zizi Jeanmaire are preparing the show with which they will return to Paris in October at the Alhambra. They are polishing up certain ballets, which Petit intends to be short, gay and fast, joined by divertissements in front of the curtain, and interrupted by only one interval. One ballet will be a new version of *Blue Beard,* danced by Jeanmaire and entitled *Lady Blue.* Vernon Duke has written the music. Another ballet has been devised by the writer Marcel Aymé, and is based on Offenbach's *Chaloupée.* Yves Saint Laurent will design all the scenery of this show, in which dancing and singing will be intermixed.

OSLO

Miss Joan Harris, who has worked in Munich as ballet mistress for the past seven years, has relinquished the post to take up an appointment as Director with the Norwegian Ballet when the Opera House in Oslo re-opens in September. The Company is to increase its number by ten dancers, Nicholas Orloff is ballet master.

BALLETS U.S.A.

Jerome Robbins' Ballets U.S.A. is to be presented in London by Peter Daubeny for a three weeks' season commencing 1st August at the Savile Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue (now renamed The Gaiety). There will be two programmes of Robbins' works including *The Concert, Afternoon of a Faun, Moves* and *N.Y. Export Opus Jazz, Interplay, Events* (not yet seen in London) and one other ballet to be announced later.

AUSTRALIA

"Ballet Australia" an organisation similar to our own Sunday Ballet Club, are planning to give another programme following the success of their previous presentation of ballets by Australian choreographers.

Leningrad dancers are to visit Australia and New Zealand later this year.

U.S.A.

Walter Sorell, who was our New York critic for almost a year during Hope Sheridan's visit to Europe, has in company with poet and musician Joe Wilson, taken over the famous Kamin Bookshop in New York.

Continued on page 21

LONDON REVIEWS

KIROV BALLET SEASON

THE STONE FLOWER

by FERNAU HALL

FOR some time after the curtain rose the choice of *The Stone Flower* as the ballet to introduce this great and ancient company to London was hard to understand. Nothing very striking caught the eye or impressed the ear. Yuri Soloviev (as the hero Danila) was clearly a talented male dancer, with a wonderful ease of movement, admirable feet and a strong technique—but what he had to do was unremarkable: a small number of classical steps, mixed with a little inexpressive mime. Katerina (Danila's beloved) had a sweet smile and a touching grace and delicacy, but was equally lacking in individuality as she performed desultory combinations of steps in the most hackneyed Soviet manner. The young choreographer Yuri Grigorovich, tackling his first important work, seemed unable to come to terms with the slow melodies of Prokofiev's music, almost ignoring the phrasing of the music for much of the time: the music was lacking in poetry or atmosphere, but it deserved more attention than this from the choreographer. As for the scenery and costumes, these suffered from an excess of timidity, being dull and unimaginative, with none of the colourful exoticism demanded by the fairy-tale theme: this was the unfortunate result of efforts to cope with criticisms of the first production of this ballet (attacked as over-ornate for a ballet based on folk-material).

The ballet first came to life when Soloviev performed a variation in which he executed with consummate ease some leaps of a type new to us: he threw up one leg in a *grand battement*, travelling over the stage as if he were going to do a *grand jeté en tournant*—and then somehow spun himself round in a *double tour en l'air*. This was masterly dancing, building up to a definite climax, and the audience responded with appropriate enthusiasm.

Scene 2 was interesting in presenting the corps de ballet in some group dances with a slightly Russian flavour and some rather more lively rhythms from the orchestra pit. In contrast to the Bolshoi corps de ballet of some years back, these dancers showed no split into age groups, with a mixture of young elegant dancers and middle-aged solid characters with a rather coarse and affected style. All the Kirov dancers were slender, graceful and good-looking, in full command of the great "Petersburg school" perfected by one remarkable teacher after another—above all Nicolas Legat. Hands were positive and meaningful, without the exaggerated break at the wrist used by many of the Bolshoi dancers, and feet were strong and well-pointed. It was very obvious that the determined efforts by the Soviet authorities to narrow down the differences between the two companies (which involved taking the best dancers, teachers and ballets from Leningrad to Moscow) had achieved their laudable aims without damaging the great traditions of the Leningrad company.

Anatoli Gridin made some impact as a very obvious villain when he entered as Severian: his movements were clean-cut, and his acting strong. But Severian was rather too obviously derived from Hilarion, and departed much too quickly at the first demonstration of opposition from Danila: this weakened both roles.

The ballet really came to life with the entrance of Alla Osipenko as the Mistress of the Copper Mountain: with her on the stage it was impossible to look at anyone else. Every inch of her beautiful body was vibrant with life, and she radiated authority; her long arms and legs stretched in the most supple and exotic curves, while retaining a marvellous precision of line, and her face had the strange transparent quality one finds in only the greatest ballerinas, revealing instantly every fluctuation in mood. Here, above all, was the *russkaya dusha*, the Russian soul which Nicolas Legat spoke of in his memoirs as characteristic of the Russian school; here was a dancer in direct line of succession from Kshessinskaya, Pavlova, Karsavina, Trefilova, Ulanova and all the other great Maryinsky ballerinas. And like all her great predecessors, Osipenko showed herself very much an individual, tackling every movement and every phrase in her own unique and creative way.

Now it was clear why *The Stone Flower* was chosen for the first night: here was a role and a performance to stand comparison with Fonteyn's Ondine, seen only a few days earlier at the opening of the Royal Ballet's season at the Kirov Theatre in Leningrad.

Throughout the rest of the ballet Osipenko continued to shine with a green and sinister lustre, seductive and yet menacing: in fact she made the role of the Mistress of the Copper Mountain stand out from the rest of the ballet in much the same way that Fonteyn's Firebird stands out from the Stravinsky ballet. (If only one could see the Kirov company in *The Firebird*, with the Fokine choreography and Osipenko in the title role!)

Unfortunately her role in *The Stone Flower* did not develop—she was given much the same movements throughout—and at the end she was made to allow Danila to return to the world without offering much opposition. This was typical of a good many dramatic weaknesses in the libretto prepared by Prokofiev's wife and the choreographer Lavrovsky after original Bolshoi production in 1954—weaknesses which were exaggerated rather than covered up by Grigorovich when he staged the ballet for the Kirov in 1957. Adapting four folk-tales narrated by P. Bazhov in the book "The Malachite Casket", Prokofieva and Lavrovsky made the ballet symbolize the search for perfection of the creative artist and the quest of the truly loving Katerina to bring back her beloved from the dangers of the mountain. Fair enough: the trouble was that they showed little understanding of the true character of the myth. Danila, for example, is not much of a hero because he never struggles and is never seen to be in peril. Katerina reduces the villain to impotence just by picking up a sickle and holding it aloft: surely she should fight him, matching her courage and determination against his strength and wickedness? She gets into the Copper Mountain without difficulty, and obtains Danila's release with equal ease: he should be so lost in his dreams of artistic perfection that he does not recognize her until she finds a way of forcing him to do this.

It was tragic to recognize in Prokofiev's music, composed near the end of his life, signs of the great struggle he had against stupid and pompous officials of the day (who attacked him for his "modernism" and "dissonance"). Much of the music was tepid; some was feebly grandiloquent; and in one scene—a divertissement performed by precious stones in the underground cavern—it was almost unbelievably sentimental, in the manner of Ponchielli. (Here the choreography and the costuming were all too well suited to the music.) In the fair scene, too, it was hard to recognize the composer of such fine ballets as *L'Enfant Prodigue*. But he did a little better in the music for the Mistress of the Copper Mountain: here he seemed to feel it safe to create a mysterious atmosphere with the use of a moderate amount of dissonance. He also wrote some stirring music for the big gypsy dance in the fair scene—and a marvellous young artist (Irina Gensler) took advantage of this to project a fiery and seductive gypsy girl, in spite of grave defects in the choreography which prevented her from building up to a climax.

A second visit enabled me to appreciate more easily the beauties of the quiet, lyrical passages in the music—many of them based on folk music—and also the power and intelligence of Grigorovich's choreography for Osipenko: dazzled by her fabulous performance (with legs curling up in incredible curves of great beauty) I had not realized how much she owed to the man who designed these curves. Undoubtedly Grigorovich has real talent, one may hope that with increasing experience he will master a wider range of choreographic expression.

WHAT stood out at once about *The Sleeping Beauty* was its authenticity: though Konstantin Sergeyev (in succession to other ballet-masters) had made some changes, they were relatively minor ones, and the ballet as a whole gained enormously from the continuity of tradition within the great theatre where it was first produced. Behind every movement and grouping one could sense a long series of alert and sensitive producers: where changes were made, they were done in full knowledge of what had been done before, and with full respect for the style of the period—so that nothing stood out as out of place.

In a very special sense the ballet as a whole gave the impression of a Sleeping Beauty, for it demands (if it is to come to life) a radiant and magical performance in the title role—and this it did not receive. Irina Kolpakova is a dancer with many good qualities: she has a strong technique, a good deal of assurance, and some quiet charm. But almost throughout the ballet she maintained the same set and unconvincing smile, and there was no magic in her movements. In fact at no time did these flow together with the inevitability achieved by such different artists as Ulanova, Struchkova, Osipenko and Fonteyn. Kolpakova was hampered by the fact that the choreography of the role avoided the striking attack, and sharp dynamic changes and crisp endings to solos which one finds in the Royal Ballet's version (as revived by N. Sergeyev); on the other hand it contained some good things peculiar to K. Sergeyev's production, such as a beautiful adage in Act III in which the Prince supports Aurora with one hand on her hip. Kolpakova was seen at her best in the solo preceding the finger-pricking, which includes big leaps that suit her well—notably the high travelling *assemblés* with *petits ronds de jambe,* and the *grands jetés en tournant* which she performed with a beat; and she acted well the fear that creeps over Aurora as the spell takes effect, for once projecting strongly to the audience.

She was splendidly partnered by Vladilen Semenov, a tall dancer with a handsome craggy face and real nobility. In his two solos (one in Act I and the other in Act III) he showed a technique which was competent but far removed from the miraculous expertise shown by Yuri Soloviev as the Blue Bird; in fact there were times (in the more difficult steps) when he failed to point his feet properly. But the Kirov management was dead right in casting these two leading male roles as they did. Soloviev made a far better impression as the Blue Bird than as Danila in *The Stone Flower* (where his habit of keeping his mouth open and his soft, almost feminine interpretation of the role deprived the ballet of the solid core it needed). In the role of the Blue Bird Soloviev was given a splendid opportunity to show his marvellous technique and pure classical style, without being required to attempt dramatic effects beyond his grasp; and he took the fullest possible advantage of this opportunity, winning a well-deserved ovation from the audience. His *brisés volés* in the coda were particularly smooth, elegant and precisely outlined. This was in fact the finest male Blue Bird to be seen here for a very long time.

The ballerina with whom Soloviev danced was described in the programme as Princess Florine rather than as another Blue Bird: here one could see the Kirov following the original tradition (just as, quite authentically, it called the hero Prince Desiré). Alla Sizova was less impressive as Princess Florine than as Katerina in *The Stone Flower:* there was the same sweetness and charm, but the feats of virtuosity were evidently not suited to her style and temperament.

Inna Zubkovskaya was particularly disappointing as the Lilac Fairy. This role demands above all grace serenity and authority: Beriosova has shown how much it can add to the ballet when it is done properly. (If only they would let her do it from time to time!) But Zubkovskaya showed stiff hands, stodgy movements and a smile even more fixed than Kolpakova's.

Of the five subaltern fairies, No. 1 (Natalia Makarova) was by far the best. The Kirov—very sensibly—gives these fairies names suggestive of the mood of their variation: No. 1 is called Tenderness, and Makarova brought out this quality very clearly by taking the dance at a very slow tempo and extending each movement to the full. In fact the tempo was just a trifle too slow for her—she could not hold all the movements quite as long as necessary—but her interpretation was nonetheless fascinating. No. 3 (Galina Kekisheva as Bountiful) suffered from a change in choreography which kept her arabesque foot on the ground instead of in the air. Galina Ivanova did well in the fourth variation (Courage), taking it at the right spanking pace and giving an agreeable suggestion of someone playing a pipe; Ludmila Alexeyeva showed a rough style with poor line in the fifth variation.

The most interesting aspect of the Prologue and Act I was the court etiquette, shown particularly in the formal *révérences* (with elaborate gestures with the hat) by which the courtiers greeted the King. This was authentic, and did much to establish the atmosphere of the period (17th century): here one could see the Kirov profiting from its long traditions, extending back through its hundreds of years as a court ballet. (Here the Royal Ballet has a good deal to learn.) Another interesting aspect of Act I was the introduction of a large number of children. Like the Danes, the Russians evidently believe in giving the young dancers of the school early stage experience—a very good idea.

Act II showed more changes than any other in the production. The patterns of movement of the corps de ballet were generally quite different from those familiar to us, though keeping well within the Petipa style. Aurora had some unexpected but effective steps in her solo in the Vision Scene—notably a jump forward on to pointe in which she seemed to float.

Act III of the Royal Ballet's production shows a good many changes from the original—this no doubt as a sequel to the many changes made by Diaghilev in his 1921 production, retained in the one-act ballet *Aurora's Wedding* performed by the Ballets-Russes in the thirties—and it was fascinating to see in the Kirov production of Act III something much closer to the original Petipa production. The characters from fairy tales were clearly established at their first entrance—the two cats being particularly effective, with the black cat bounding up to claw at the white cat riding serenely on a litter carried very high by four lackeys.

Then we had dances from the four fairies Diamond, Sapphire, Golden and Silver: this was as in the original production, and replaced the pas de trois *Florestan and his Two Sisters* familiar to us, which has in fact no basis in the Petipa production or even the Diaghilev production. (Who on earth dreamed up the name Florestan for the male dancer in this pas de trois?—this in fact is the King's name.) Though one welcomed the chance to see something akin to what Petipa intended, the actual performances by the four junior soloists were not very good.

Apart from Soloviev's Blue Bird, the most intriguing item in Act III was the pas de deux of the two cats. This was staged with far more wit and pungency than the Royal Ballet's version. Galina Kekisheva danced and acted superbly, changing at lightning speed (in a truly cat-like way) from provocative, langorous tenderness to spitting agression; she used her eyes brilliantly, flashing them at the black cat with a coquettishness calculated to drive anyone (cat or human) around the bend. Oleg Kusnetsov was almost equally good as Puss-in-Boots, reacting instantaneously to every provocation from his bewitching but infuriating consort.

An item from the Petipa production, new to us, was *Hop-o'-my-Thumb and the Ogre:* here we saw a line of small boys, led by one anonymous boy in big boots, presumably from an English school, who

Kirov continued on page 21
Other London Reviews page 8

Inesita

SHYAMA

ON 17th May the celebrations in honour of the Tagore centenary came to a climax in two shows presented at St. Pancras Town Hall, which included Tagore songs by the celebrated Rajeswari Datta and scenes from a Tagore dance-drama *Shyama.* Tagore, in addition to being a poet, short-story writer, philosopher and painter, was also a composer and choreographer : he wrote and produced a number of drance-dramas (for performance by young men and women trained at his university Shantiniketan) in which the words were sung by one group and the actions corresponding to the words performed by dancers ; in fact his work in this field had great influence on all who followed him in staging Indian ballet, and his dance-dramas are still performed by Shantiniketan students and graduates in the Tagore style (which brings together simplified Manipuri, some Kathakali mudras, folk-dance steps, etc., into a gentle lyrical synthesis which fits very well the lyrical melodies and simple rhythms of the corresponding songs).

It was impossible to organise in London a Shantiniketan-trained cast to perform the complete *Shyama ;* but two talented ex-Shantiniketans — Madhuri Mukherjee (Shyama) and Monisha Bose (Vajrasen) did well in the two leading roles, and the Kathak dancer Rina Singha adapted Kathak bhava (dramatic expression) with skill and imagination to the Tagore words and melodies. Monjusha Bose (sister of Monisha) made a very handsome young man, and moved with admirable grace, though of course she could not project like the experienced principals. In fact both the important male parts (Vajrasen and Uttiya) were taken by girls : something which was quite in harmony with Oriental dance traditions and for which a precedent had been established by Tagore himself. For the simple but effective production (and skilful cutting) chief credit must go to Monisha Bose.

The dance-drama itself, based on an old Buddhist legend, tells of the passionate love of Shyama (a court dancer) for the

Continued at foot first col. under "Inesita"

INESITA

ON 23rd May Inesita made her first theatrical appearance in London in a show presented by the Asian Music Circle at St. Pancras Town Hall. Unfortunately it proved impossible to show the North Indian equivalents of her dancing and music, so that the links with the East were not as clear as they might have been ; but her own dancing, in the long middle section of the programme, was so breathtaking that this mattered little. Her dances were imaginatively chosen to set each other off, and the suite went with great smoothness, item following item in a fascinating pattern of contrasts.

Danza No. 9 revealed an unsuspected facet of her talent: mastery of the style perfected by Argentina, with movements from Flamenco and Andalusian dances of the Sevillanas type, combined with complex castanet-playing, and fitted to piano music. True to the Argentina tradition, Inesita danced with a heart-warming smile and a piercing beauty of line in the backward-bending poses characteristic of this style. A lightning change, and she flung herself into a delightful dance in a style which might perhaps be described as stylized Flamenco. This was called *Polo,* after the piano piece by Albeniz to which it was danced ; but both musically and choreographically it was remote from the Flamenco dance of that name, being more like a gay and impudent Bulerías. Flamenco dancing to "set" piano music is normally very tame compared with the real thing, performed in flexible collaboration with guitarist and singer ; but Inesita showed in this hybrid form the same imaginative flair for construction as in pure Flamenco.

Continued in next column

Shyama—*continued*

merchant Vajrasen, who is wrongly accused of theft : to save his life she allows Uttiya (hopelessly in love with her) to sacrifice his own. The lovers have a short scene of bliss, but the end is very sad, with the lovers estranged by their consciousness of Shyama's sin—which Vajrasen cannot forgive. The whole atmosphere is delightfully Indian in its freshness and sweetness.

The next dance made the greatest imaginable contrast with *Polo.* In the very Oriental and magical *Soleares,* with its expression of deep despair and loneliness, Inesita is easily the finest performer I have ever seen, and at St. Pancras Town Hall she was greatly helped by having with her not only a talented guitarist (G. Dias) but a very promising singer (Rafael Rodriguez). It was a delight to see her working with the musicians, projecting her moods at them in the mysterious Flamenco way and clearly establishing every change in mood, tempo and phrasing.

Then came a regional suite—with Inesita showing a nice gaucherie in an Aragonese Jota and a Galician Muñeira, and two other dancers, their bodies hidden by enormous heads, performing a charmingly stilted Jota. The programme ended with a Cuadro Flamenco, with the appropriate *jaleo* (handclapping, shouts, etc.) and Inesita working up through an *Alegrías* and a comic *Bulerías* to a climax in *Escobilla*—pure footwork in which she displayed a crackling series of virtuoso rhythms.

The whole suite of dances was so well-planned and perfectly executed that it made one long to see Inesita in a programme lasting a whole evening: like Ruth Draper, she has such versatility that she creates the effect of a whole company of artists.

KUMARI KAMALA

ON 10th and 13th May Kumari Kamala and her group gave two recitals at the Scala Theatre, under the auspices of the India Arts Society. Kamala began as a child prodigy, and has been known for some years in India as one of the leading exponents of Bharata Natyam ; she is in fact the first major Bharata Natyam specialist to appear here since Shanta.

From the advance publicity one expected the first show to be mainly classical and the second to be mainly concerned with film and folk dances ; wisely, however, Kamala chose to devote both recitals very largely to classical Bharata Natyam. Both recitals had as their pièce de résistance a Varnam showing the ten incarnations of Vishnu, danced by Kamala herself. It was easy to understand why, faced with a partly European audience, she cut this Varnam to the bare minimum, making it last about 20 minutes instead of 45 minutes or more, as is expected by an audience of Bharata Natyam aficionados ; the passages of *abhinava* (dramatic dancing) showing the incarnations were (with one exception) cut to the minimum, as so were the passages of pure dancing separating the passages of *abhinava.* Kamala established herself in this item as a highly trained and very polished artist, keeping good line even in the fastest items and getting her foot and arm accents dead in time with the music ; moreover she danced with the authority one might expect from an artist who has had great success from an early age. (Here there was an interesting contrast with her talented sister Radha, who looks much like her and has the same style, but still lacks Kamala's stage presence).

Nevertheless the Varnam failed to make the overwhelming impact this dance can do at its best. The limitation in the number of *adavus* (standard passages of pure dance) prevented Kamala from building up to climaxes of virtuosity in the proper Varnam manner ; and her treatment of most of the incarnations was a trifle off-hand. But she showed her real quality in her treatment of Krishna : this section she built up with a good deal of charm and humour and characterized both Krishna and the gopi with whom he danced with delightful clarity. At the first recital she spoiled a scene in which the gopi showed her anger with Krishna (who had just broken her pot of milk) by some crude naturalistic acting, no doubt deriving from her film experience ; but at the second recital she gave a superb rendering of Radha making herself beautiful before the Holi festival, and Krishna squirting colour over Radha with a syringe.

The most unusual and interesting item in the two shows was a Natanam Adinar (showing Shiva's cosmic dance) which Kamala performed as a pas de deux with her sister Radha ; usually the sisters danced alternate sections, the dancer not in action taking up one of the ancient beautiful poses described in the Bharata Natya Sastra and represented in sculpture on the Chidambaran Temple ; and Kamala did wonders in performing the *adavus* with a strong, noble masculine quality appro-

priate to Lord Shiva, creator and destroyer of the universe.

Kamala's youngest sister Vasanti showed real promise in an extract from a famous and unique Bharata Natyam dance drama *Kutrala Kuravanji,* in which she gave a delightful impression of a provocative gypsy girl; her eye movements were bold and clear, thus projecting her expressions out to the audience. (Both Kamala and Radha suffered from eye make-up—with black lines inside the eyelids, in the Indian manner—which made their eye-movements almost invisible).

The first recital was damaged by a travesty of Kathak, performed by Sudarshan Kumar: this dancer managed to go through an entire dance purporting to be Kathak, without performing a single movement with authentic line or style; and it is very regrettable that Kamala (who herself is usually a model of authenticity and good style in her classical work) should allow the fair name of Kathak to be smirched in this way.

GREEK FESTIVAL

ON 27th May dancers converged from many parts of England for a "Festival of Youth" at Morley College, organised by the Greek Dance Association and bringing together the finalists in group and duet dancing. There were competitions for groups and duets in three age groups, as well as a choreography competition, and the festival lasted most of the day. The panel of judges included the founder of revived Greek dance, Ruby Ginner herself—full of vitality and good sense.

As the day went by I found that in almost every event one group or couple stood out by their beauty of line, rhythmic vitality, stage presence, strong technique, imaginative story and intelligent choreography. To my astonishment I found that in every case the group or couple came from the same school—the Worthing School of Dancing. No. 4 in the Duet competition for 7 - 10 years was particularly interesting: here we saw the Hans Andersen story *The Prince and the Mermaid* (choreographer, Jean Butterworth) danced by two admirably trained tots, one of whom—the Mermaid, nine-year-old Jill Prewett—moved with the aplomb of a ballerina: as with a Legong dancer of Bali, one did not think of her as a *young* dancer, but quite simply as an artist in full command of her art. What stood out was the assurance and skill with which she used her head to project her moods boldly out to the audience and her remarkable clarity of line. This item was runner-up, though to my mind it was easily the best of its group; and in all the subsequent sections entries from this school were either first (five times) or runner-up (twice). Another Worthing item of special interest was *The Lantern and the Poisoned Cloak.* Somehow the choreographer (Rita Ireland) managed to imbue this item with the qualities of true child art; this was particularly true of the story, with its strong element of irrational fantasy and its wonder-working "props". The Worthing item which aroused the greatest response from audience and judges was the entry for the choreography competition — *The Moon Moths,* with choreography from the student Teresa Early. This also had an imaginative, magical theme which was original and yet convincing: a small girl (Jill Prewett again,

Continued at foot of next column

ROYAL BALLET SCHOOL SHOW

FOR the third school show, on 13th May, Ninette de Valois decided on a change of policy, presenting two one-act ballets (together with a display of gymnastics) instead of a full-length classic: in a curtain speech she explained that in this way, she felt, the students would have a better chance of widening their range of interpretation, and developing a greater sense of characterisation and more individuality. There is much to commend in these ideas: my only complaint, like that of Oliver Twist, is to ask for more. In fact I should have liked the gymnastic display to be cut down; for this made its point—that boys training for ballet can be helped towards manliness by gymnastics, thus encouraging parents of boys to let them take up ballet—in five minutes, or less. In place of much of the lengthy gymnastics we might well have had a strong dramatic one-act ballet added to the programme: this would have given the students far more opportunity to develop their sense of characterisation than two light comedies like *Pineapple Poll* and *Les Patineurs.*

Of these, *Pineapple Poll* was the less successful. The students (well produced by Barbara Fewster) danced with a good deal of precision and care, and also with much sincerity: in fact this student corps de ballet could challenge comparison with that of the main company.

But the soloists were unable to establish the characters very clearly. The best efforts were those of Susan Jones (small, bouncing and jolly—a promising dancer who has just joined the company) and Jane Hammond, who gave an individual touch of smugness to Blanche.

Les Patineurs, produced by Pamela May, came over better because of three remarkable performances in solo roles. Two small compact danseuses gave warm, assured and technically flawless performances of the difficult roles of the "Blue Girls": Hilary Debden,* winner of a New Zealand Government bursary, turned an impeccable series of 32 fouettés without moving an inch, while Ann Jenner gave her double *posé* turns with changing arms the same breathtaking speed and precision as Annette Page. Dudley Tomlinson (winner of the South African Teachers' Association scholarship) was not equal to all the technical demands of the "Blue Boy", but he acted the role splendidly, giving it just the right flavour of impudent self-satisfaction.

* *Full name Hilary Debden-Wilkins, and the same dancer referred to in* Editor's Log *this issue.*

THE NUTCRACKER IN HARLOW

DURING the week ending 28th May Leo and Janet Kersley (directors of the Harlow School of Ballet) tackled something very ambitious indeed: four performances of almost the whole of *The Nutcracker,* in the theatre of the Harlow College of Further Education. Results achieved were impressive, in view of the fact that the school has only been in existence for two years, and it was clear that the art of ballet has become solidly established in this rapidly expanding New Town.

Some of the most interesting performances were those given by Sarah Page (Snow Queen, Spanish dancer and Arabian dancer). Her technique is still immature, but she has a beautiful face which looks stunning under stage lighting, and a good feeling for arm movements. Young Cheryl St. Clare looked exceptionally assured and relaxed as Clara, clearly enjoying every moment of her part.

One of the most impressive features of this show (which had been in preparation since Christmas) was the smooth running: everything went according to plan. *The Nutcracker* has many advantages for a school show—among others, the fact that it provides opportunities for large numbers of small children. Some of the "corps de ballet" girls would have looked better in long skirts rather than tutus; but the tutus of the two principal danseuses (made by Mrs. Betty Kavanagh) were a small miracle of craftsmanship.

ASSOCIATION OF BALLET CLUBS

ON 20th May the Association of Ballet Clubs presented "An Evening of Ballet" at the Rudolf Steiner Theatre, with eight items from four ballet clubs. The general standard was better than last year, largely because in many cases the clubs chose themes suited to the limitations and capacities of the artists taking part—whether evening pupils or professional students. There was in fact a violent contrast between the embarrassing ineptitude of nearly all the pure classical work—in which the feeling expressed by the tense bodies and faces of the dancers was almost always justifiable anxiety about their chances of getting through the steps—and the gusto of the best grotesque and character work.

Pictures at an Exhibition, presented by the Lewisham Ballet Theatre Club, with choreography by Maria Zybina, had a theme admirably chosen for performance by artists who seemed to be almost all evening pupils. The best item was "Hut of Baba Yaga", in which the dancers enjoyed themselves in grotesque witch movements. But the ballet as a whole failed to create any real atmosphere because of the flat lighting, which made the dancers melt into the curtains: there were spots and floods available, and these should have been used.

The most ambitious theme was that of *Tristan and Isolde,* presented by the Harlow Ballet Club. The choreographer (Janet Sinclair) set herself a very difficult problem when she chose to use music by Wagner; being from the opera, this was right in mood, but unfortunately Wagner's slow-moving *melos,* without rhythmic accents, is little suited to dancing. The choreographer's best idea was the use of a good deal of stasis: King Mark, in particular, stayed for long periods in a single tense pose. But the marriage of long-held poses and simple classical steps was not entirely satisfactory.

Greek Festival—*continued*

in fine form) rescues some captured moths and finally joins them, in disgust with brutal humanity. The choreographer did not limit herself to the revived Greek technique, and it was obvious that her dancers had a sound ballet technique; in fact it would be interesting to see a balletic version of this item.

Nostalgic memories of the pre-War Ballet Club at the Mercury Theatre, activated by the unexpected sight of Leo Kersley dancing Tristan, were re-inforced by *The Love Set*, presented by the Janet Cranmore Ballet Theatre (Birmingham): this had the same sort of admirable comic idea behind it (satire of tennis) as *Sporting Sketches* performed by the Ballet Club, but was lacking in the wit of the pre-war suite of ballets.

Svatovac, the second ballet presented by the Lewisham Ballet and Theatre Club with choreography by Maria Zybina, ended with a cheerfully rumbustious marriage dance in an eclectric Yugoslav style which suited the dancers well ; credit must go to Daphne Neech for costumes which had the right regional flavour and a good balance of white and colours, without seeking for a detailed accuracy which here was unnecessary.

The most successful item was the last—*Skazka*, performed by the Nina Hubbard Ballet Club (Cambridge), with choreography, scenario and costumes by Nina Hubbard. Here the allocation of choreographic difficulties among the talent available was so intelligent and sensitive that no blatant inadequacies were visible from beginning to end, and there were some outstanding performances—notably Alison Ingram as the Queen of Evil Spirits (excellent classical line, strong technique, a fine sinister beauty of face) and six young Evil Spirits whose enjoyment of their jagged, wicked movements was infectious : Nicola Betts, Alyson Brown, April Burgess, June Flack, Patricia Jordan and Marie Mealing. The Beast (Tom Parker) had to make his effects almost entirely with arm and head movements, and did this very well.

FERNAU HALL

SCOTTISH NOTES

ON 10th May Catharine Marks and Richard Brown of Glasgow's Theatre Ballet Studio, presented *An Evening of Theatre Ballet* under the auspices of the Falcon Theatre Organisation at the Empress.

This was actually very enjoyable chamber ballet, opening with *A Little Night Ballet* (music, Rossini/Mozart: choreography Richard Brown), in which the dancers gave an amusing and light-hearted glimpse of preparation for a performance. Seri Lueamrung, the company's second male dancer (Brown is the other) distinguished himself here, but was disappointing later in Veronica Bruce's reproduction of *Le Spectre de la Rose*. The latter ballet, however, was redeemed by the performance of Maureen Gardner, a young dancer who has excellent line, control and expressiveness. She was equally good as the South Wind in *The Weathercock*, in which Miss Marks gave us Lueamrung in the title role flirting with the four winds until, in their anger, they raise a storm and throw him down from his steeple.

Richard Brown, an unspectacular but technically accomplished dancer, shone best in his own *Sonata for Dancers*, to Beethoven's music. In *The Blessed Damozel* Miss Marks successfully recreated a pre-Raphaelite atmosphere in her treatment of Rossetti's poetic theme, but there was not a great deal of interest dance-wise.

She also choreographed the final piece of the evening, *The Servant's Ball*, in which the lightness of Sullivan's music was matched by the lively humour projected by the whole company in this depiction of the hierarchy of the Edwardian Servants' Hall.

D. K. CAMERON

BALLET GUIDE

LENINGRAD STATE KIROV BALLET
at Covent Garden

4th & 5th July	(eve)	*Gala Programme*
6th & 7th	(eve)	*Giselle*
8th	(mat)	*Gala Programme*
8th	(eve)	*The Stone Flower*
10th	(eve)	*Gala Programme*
11th-13th	(eve)	*Swan Lake*
14th	(eve)	*The Sleeping Beauty*
15th	(mat) & (eve)	*The Sleeping Beauty*

FESTIVAL BALLET
at Royal Festival Hall

Daily at 8 p.m. Sats. 5 & 8 p.m.

w/c 17th July	*The Snow Maiden*
„ 24th „	*The Snow Maiden*
„ 31st „	*Swan Lake* (Act II), *The Witch Boy*, *Bourrée Fantasque*
„ 7th Aug.	*The Snow Maiden*

BALLETS MINERVA

w/c 17th July at Streatham Common (Grass Theatre)

MASQUE BALLET CLUB

One perf. only—22nd July 8 p.m.
Emma Conns Theatre, Morley College.

EDUARDO AND NAVARRA

w/c 10th July Repertory Theatre, Colchester

Continued in next column

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18th	July	Tues.	(eve)	*Night Shadow, The Sylphide*
19th	„	Wed.	(eve)	*Night Shadow, The Sylphide*
20th	„	Thurs.	(eve)	*Night Shadow, Czernyana, Night and Silence, Hazana*
21st	„	Fri.	(eve)	*Night Shadow, Czernyana, Night and Silence, Hazana*
22nd	„	Sat.	(eve)	*Coppelia*
22nd	„	Sat.	(mat)	*Coppelia*
24th	„	Mon.	(eve)	*The Sylphide, Night Shadow*
25th	„	Tues.	(eve)	*Laiderette, A Place in the Desert, Night and Silence, Facade*
26th	„	Wed.	(eve)	*Laiderette, A Place in the Desert, Night and Silence, Facade*
27th	„	Thurs.	(eve)	Tudor Programme
28th	„	Fri.	(eve)	*Giselle, A Place in the Desert*
29th	„	Sat.	(eve)	*Giselle, A Place in the Desert*
29th	„	Sat.	(mat)	*Giselle, A Place in the Desert*
31st	„	Mon.	(eve)	*Two Brothers, Night Shadow, Winter Night, Hazana*
1st	Aug.	Tues.	(eve)	*Two Brothers, Night Shadow, Winter Night, Hazana*
2nd	„	Wed.	(eve)	Tudor Programme
3rd	„	Thurs.	(eve)	*Winter Night, Czernyana, A Place in the Desert, Gala Performance*
4th	„	Fri.	(eve)	*The Sylphide, Night Shadow*
5th	„	Sat.	(eve)	*The Sylphide, A Place in the Desert*
5th	„	Sat.	(mat)	*The Sylphide, A Place in the Desert*

Readers are reminded that all programmes are subject to alteration.

MIDLANDS FESTIVAL OF BALLET
at the Coventry Theatre, Coventry 11th-15th July

Pas de Quatre—Fracci, Hightower, Krassovska, Schanne.
The Duel—Marchand, Miskovitch.
Excerpts from *Kermesse in Bruges*—Schanne, Noack.
Don Quixote Pas de Deux—Hightower, Prokovsky.
Bolero—Dolin.
Excerpts from *La Sylphide*—Schanne, Noack.
Le Spectre de la Rose—Fracci, Gilpin.
Soirée Musicale—Marchand, Miskovitch.
Harlequinade—Fracci, Gilpin.
The Black Swan Pas de Deux—Hightower, Prokovsky.

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Marie Rambert, C.B.E. *Photo : Elizabeth Cull*

Left : **Lucette Aldous in** *Coppelia*
Photo : Mercer of Perth

MARIE RAMBERT AND HER DANCERS

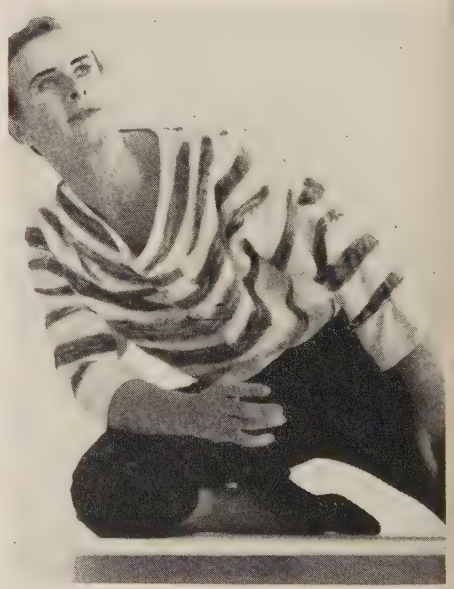
IT IS in keeping with the recurring pattern of Marie Rambert's life that during this coming season in London we shall see both the work of Walter Gore, who made his debut as a choreographer with the Ballet Rambert in 1938, and Norman Morrice, Rambert's new and rising young choreographer now launching into his fourth ballet.

Herein lies the secret of this extraordinary woman. In concerning herself with the perpetuation of the species, like mother nature, she renews herself season after season. So that at an age when most people are content to look back over their past achievements, she is still inspiring and activating the new generation of dancers, designers and choreographers.

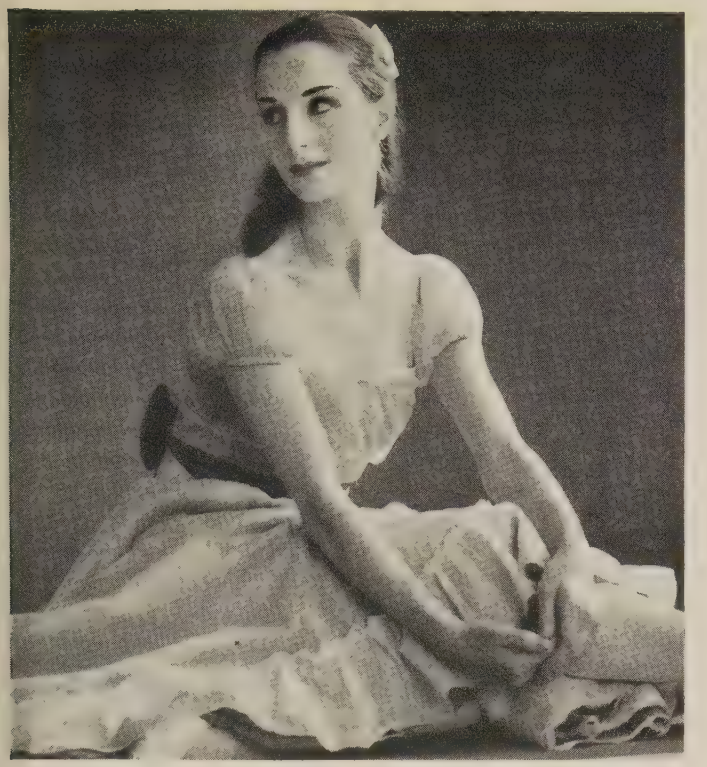
Norman Morrice
Photo : Marion

The career of Norman Morrice is a typical example of Madame Rambert's ability to find and develop potential talent. Morrice was already nineteen years of age when he joined the Rambert organisation, late in life to commence training, nevertheless he became a fine dancer and could well have been satisfied with this as a career. But, as in so many cases throughout the years, Marie Rambert discovered and encouraged another side to his talent, and in 1958 gave Morrice the opportunity to create his first ballet *The Two Brothers*, which received excellent notices both in this country and later in America. This ballet was followed by *Hazana* in 1959, and *The Wise Monkeys* in 1960. That Madame Rambert's confidence in his future was not misplaced became apparent last December when Morrice was awarded a Fellowship in Choreography under the American Young Artists Project to spend three months in America to observe American methods of ballet production and technical training as well as performances of various companies across the country.

Many famous ballerinas have begun their careers with Rambert, but few could have done so much in so short a time with a Company as Lucette Aldous, their present ballerina. Born in Auckland, New Zealand Miss Aldous, daughter of a dancer, spent most of her early years in Sydney, where in 1955 she gained a scholarship to study in London at the Royal Ballet School. She joined Rambert in 1957, and it has been fascinating to watch the meteoric rise of this young star, who is still only in her 23rd year. In 1960, for the second year in succession, Miss Aldous danced before the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret at the Gala Matinée at Drury Lane with Margot Fonteyn. Earlier in the same year Lucette took the leading role in Ballet Rambert's production of *La Sylphide*, which was also televised by BBC in March of this year. In both productions she was partnered by Flemming Flindt, Royal Danish Ballet star. In 1960 Miss Aldous married Maurice Fitzmaurice son of Sir Gerald Fitzmaurice, Q.C.



John Chesworth in *Simple Symphony.*
Photo : Roy Round



Left : **Gillian Martlew**

(above) **as the Witch in the BBC TV production of Ballet Rambert's** *La Sylphide*
Photo : by courtesy of BBC

Ballet Rambert tour for nearly four-fifths of the year, and the 45-strong company spend their Sundays travelling to the next engagement. Eight shows a week, rehearsals every day for six days a week is the regular routine for its members, and one can only marvel that despite the alarming crises which must occur with such a routine the dancers always appear so enthusiastic and dedicated to their art.

A pillar of strength to such a Company, in fact to any company, is Gillian Martlew, who never fails to win excellent notices from the critics. As a child she sang, danced and acted in "The Juvenile Follies" entertaining American troops during the war. Appeared in Pantomimes, "Toad of Toad Hall" at the Arts Theatre in Cambridge, and a pantomime at London's Palladium. In 1950 she joined Ballet Rambert and over the years has danced her way through a tremendously varied number of roles. Equally at home as the shuffling old witch in *La Sylphide*, or as the imperious, icily cruel Queen of the Wilis, her dancing and fine performances in character roles constitute one of the highlights of the Rambert season at Sadler's Wells. In Norman Morrice's three ballets Miss Martlew created the roles of the Young Girl in *Two Brothers*, the Wife in *Hazana*, a Woman of the World in *The Wise Monkeys*, and the role of the Woman in Red in Cranko's ballet *La Reja*, produced for the Company in 1959.

John Chesworth is the male dancer with the longest period of service with the Ballet Rambert Company, he entered the School in 1950 and eighteen months later joined the Company. Although he has danced practically all the leading roles in the Company's repertoire he prefers character roles, and indeed Rambert produces very few dancers who are content to play the Prince Charming type of role indefinitely. John Chesworth's interpretations are always sincere, and it is obvious that he gives a great deal of thought to each of his portrayals, for his characters always emerge as believable types. He is married to another Rambert dancer, Valerie Marsh, served in the R.A.F. in a Night Fighter Squadron, and his hobbies include sporting cars, photography and Rugby football.

Kenneth Bannerman, who joined the Company in 1957, is also a versatile dancer who has received good notices for his performances as Franz in *Coppelia*, Albrecht in *Giselle* and was the first British dancer to take the role of James in *La Sylphide*. His first professional appearance was with the Comedie Francaise at the Edinburgh Festival. He is one of five boys in a family with a medical background, his father is a doctor, his mother a nurse. During his military service he was a Corporal in the Royal Artillery.

Shirley Dixon, who joined the Rambert School in 1955 is still only 22 years of age,

Shirley Dixon
Photo : John Blomfield

Kenneth Bannerman
Photo : Robert Belton

yet her characterisation, and dancing, in the role of Effie in *La Sylphide* was highly praised during the Company's London season last year. Another rising young star, June Sandbrook, is the same age, and has already a truly formidable number and variety of roles to her credit, including the Daughter in *Hazana*, which she created, and The Sylph in *La Sylphide*.

It is only possible within the limits of this article to mention a few of the dancers in the Company. Suffice it to say that in every performance there is evidence that Marie Rambert's influence is as strong today as it was so many years ago when she acquired the little theatre up on the hill, the Mercury, which was destined to become the cradle of English ballet.

Today Madame Rambert is ably supported by David Ellis, who joined the Ballet Rambert in 1946, and is married to her daughter Angela. They too have continued the traditions of the Company, founding Ballet Workshop in 1951 from which have come so many of the present generation of choreographers, designers, artists and musicians. E.H.

Maria Fris with Rainer Köchermann in Walter Gore's ballet *Flügel des Schlafes*

GERMANY

HAMBURG

Tragic Death of Maria Fris

IT IS with great sadness that we record the death of Maria Fris in Hamburg on the 27th May. Only 29 years of age, Miss Fris unable to face life without dancing, is reported to have thrown herself from the cat-walk of the Hamburg State Opera. Only a few hours later she was to have resumed rehearsals with her partner Rainer Köchermann, but on several occasions in the past year she had been forced to give up owing to recurrent foot trouble and had expressed the conviction that she would never be able to dance again.

This tiny, sensitive girl, who was to become one of Germany's finest lyrical dancers, was a soloist at the age of 16 with the Berlin Municipal Opera. She spent two years with Janine Charrat's company touring Europe and Africa. In Frankfurt, as ballerina, she worked under Walter Gore and with the Béjart Company. Miss Fris returned to Hamburg early this year to lead the Hamburg State Ballet company in a television film of Balanchine's *Serenade*, with another Balanchine work *Concerto Barocco*. Due to her many TV appearances and film work, she became Germany's best known ballerina.

Writing of her in our "Meet the Dancers" series in December 1957, Dr. Wilfried Hofmann said "Maria lives right next to joy and sorrow, and must express herself creatively".

Maria Fris' tragedy was that she could not compromise when her tiny body failed to match up in strength to her fine artistic spirit. E.H.

See Walter Gore's *Letter to the Editor*—page 24 this issue.

MUNICH

Ravinala, the National Ballet of Madagascar

THEY came to Munich on 16th May and brought a programme of ritual dances, folk music and songs. The instrumental music, with surprisingly few drums, was delightful with its delicate string instruments, and so were the songs. To the European audience endless repetition of the same theme easily becomes tiring, but as the programme note stated, music and dances have been left unaltered intentionally. Since there was little variation in steps even between the different dances, one could not escape a sense of monotony which in the ritual dances could become haunting, but was a little dull in the gay scenes. There was very little vigorous dancing even for the men, and the scenes depicting everyday activities of the people were an all too literal translation of their movements into terms of dancing. As in this case no rituals were concerned, a little more imagination and variety of

the dancing world

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and pictures

movement might not have been amiss. While in this way no concessions were made to western audiences, the costumes sometimes showed an unfortunate European warehouse influence, which was a pity in this otherwise so strictly orthodox exhibition of the folk dancing of this young republic. Dancers and singers showed a simple confidence and obvious joy in everything they did that was altogether charming.

Ballet Nacional Folklorico de Mexico

This season at the Deutsches Theatre from 24th May to 4th June showed us folklore seen from quite an opposite angle, that adopted also by Igor Moisseiev, i.e. the adaptation of folklore elements into a definite choreographic form without falsifying them. Amalia Hernàndez, the artistic director of the company, admirably achieved this. Her aim is to show the three great phases of culture in Mexico and its expression in music and dance.

In some parts of the country the ancient ritual dances of the Indians are still alive today, such as the dance of the stag, an entreaty to the gods for rich prey, in which the animal's movements, its strength and grace and heroic death are wonderfully captured. Mythological birds, the symbols for elegance and beauty, inspired another dance in which the men balance huge wheels of coloured feathers on their heads, and there are lovely songs from Michoacan. The Spanish invaders brought with them new forms of dancing. The result of the amalgamation was a new way of dancing for man's enjoyment, full of vitality and a Spanish elegance, but less intricate especially in arm movements, with a sense of humour when the gentleman teases his lady waving a red scarf in the way of a toreador, exuberant in its everchanging rhythms and patterns. Similarly, old rites were adapted to the new religion, and just as in Mediterranean countries religious ceremonies and profane festivities are closely linked, as becomes evident from a scene "Christmas at Jalisco", where the last notes of a beautiful hymn have not died away when the gay temperament of a people living in a country of eternal sunshine breaks through in more dancing and singing. About 1910, during the Mexican revolution, there was a new creative period, that brought new folksongs about the nation's heroes, and new kind of ballroom dances like the polka.

The entire production was admirable. there was never a dull moment, ancient and modern elements, dancing and singing, religious and profane scenes were perfectly balanced. The colourful costumes were magnificent, the dancing was of a high technical standard and yet of spontaneous vitality; there was a beautifully disciplined choir and last but not least an excellent orchestra, with some virtuosos, especially a harpist, a marimba quartet and an Indian playing a tiny flute and drum simultaneously. They all fully deserved the enthusiastic applause.

INGE ZÜRNER

BÉJART IN WIESBADEN

THE guest appearance of Maurice Béjart's Ballet du XXe Siècle during the Wiesbaden International May Festival (13th and 14th May) was of special interest for several reasons: What effect has the Asaf Messerer training and the "institutionalization" in Brussels had on the company? How would Béjart's trend to monumental ballets be received in Germany, where, after all, he had originally scored his first big successes?

As to be expected, it was this company of some 50 dancers which in between three weeks of opera, caused shock and (therefore) festival excitement. *Pulcinella* (still too fuzzy in spite of an increased richness resulting from revising and re-editing) and Charrat's *Jeu de Cartes* (still fresh looking, but all too Lifar-indebted in its Leitmotif-choreography of rather conventional nature) passed as light-weight pieces of the all-Stravinsky programmes framing Béjart's heavy-weight *Orphée* and *Le Sacre du Printemps*.

With both of these two works Béjart has reached beyond the range of his earlier one act or chamber ballets into the realm of the grand spectacle. But also he remains "true" to his sometimes tiresome obsession with the isolated man and sex. *Orphée*, dominated by Henry's music and Rudolph Kuefner's decors, leaves us with the kind of mixed feelings caused by ballets containing marvellous and hideous scenes all in one (too long) series. Béjart has tried to create a "world opus". Under the title of *Orphée* he in fact discusses all Béjart-problems from life and death, love and isolation, fear and desperation to war and peace as if he wanted to create a ballet equivalent to Goethe's Faust or Dante's Divina Commedia. What a pretentious intellectual overburdening!—In the realization itself, Béjart also walks the dangerous tightrope between the monumental and the ridiculous ("The Lovers" as compared to "Venus"!). There is too much of Béjart himself on stage, an ill-fitting introduction of pantomime ("The Travel"!), and too obviously for a German audience the employment of mass scenes which Rudolf v. Laban and Kurt Joos used 25 years ago in a more proficient way (*Eurydice*).

Le Sacre, on the contrary, finally comes as the first adequate solution of this "undanceable" score through visual equivalents, a task unsuccessfully tried by Nijinsky, Massine, Graham, Wigman. This task Béjart achieved by resorting to a legitimate trick: He changed the libretto to a monumental portrayal of the awakening of mankind in its sexes. This way, Béjart not only arrives at constant action. His interpretation also allows him to avoid centring around one single dancer, and to play on modern man's associations with Stravinsky's score. Such a change of libretto is legitimate because it has been the lack of equilibrium between libretto and score which have kept *Sacre* a puzzle. What is allowed for Robbin's *L'Après-midi d'un Faune* must be permitted for *Le Sacre*!

Béjart's choreography economizes through (a) a scenic separation of men and women, (b) a slow build-up from lying positions, and because he does not try—as others did—to express the climaxes through jumps or perpetual turns.

Here is the libretto of *Sacre* as I felt it: Part I (Man): alert, blustering, belligerent, competitive, god-dominated, fate-dominated, sullen, half-animal, half-man, intolerant, cruel, swarming, rhythm-mad.
Part II (Women): developing, sinuous, awakening, discovering, preparing, soft, self-conscious.
Part III (Men and Women): Two worlds, pack and prey, electricity, touch, clash, sizzle, orgy, ecstasy, realization, love, light.

Except for the incompatibility of decors (Scene I: God knows what? Scene II, III: Henry Moorish objects) *Le Sacre* is Béjart's maturest and most compact work.

The company shows indeed promise of greater technical proficiency and—in *Pulcinella*—rudiments of the Russian School. It is still due to Béjart's style only that the relatively great gap between the aptitudes of corps and soloists does not fully show. Among these soloists: Janine Charrat, as delightful as ever; Tania Bari (Mrs. Woman herself, the ideal Béjart medium); sparkling Duska Sifnios with instepless feet of steel which she plants into the floor in a challenging disrespectful way; agile and intense André Leclair (as "Joker"), boyish Patrick Belda, still taller and slimmer, in whom Béjart movements necessarily obtain an entirely different quality, and Andrée Marliere.

It has become a habit to call Béjart the "European Robbins". Even while there is a grain of salt to it, one must not overlook that Robbins (the professional) and Béjart (the self-made man) differ in all essential points: Philosophy, choice of subjects, style and technique. Béjart shows a certain self-involvement where Robbins is detached. Béjart's style has no ethnical components. His works largely belong to the experimental where Robbins works with Broadway perfection. Robbins economizes where Béjart carries real obsession on stage. The relationship of these two great figures of the contemporary dance stage is the one of professor (Robbins) and autodidact (Béjart).

DR. WILFRIED HOFMANN

OUR CRITICS:

London	Fernau Hall
Paris	Ferdinand Reyna
New York	Hope Sheridan
Moscow	Nina Karasyova
Amsterdam	Ine Rietstap
Venice	Robert Paterson
Auckland	Keith Woods
Tokyo	C. A. Eland
San Francisco	Jack Anderson
Brisbane	Paul Moulds
Cape Town	Marina Grut
Monte Carlo	J. R. Farrington
Munich	Ingeborg Zürner
Johannesburg	Mary Kenwood
Belgrade	Milica Zajcev-Daric
Hamburg	Robin Hamilton-Webb
Chicago	Ann Barzel
Cairo	Eric de Nemes
Bonn, Cologne	Dr. Wilfried Hofmann

THE ROYAL BALLET IN JAPAN

reviewed by **CYRIL ELAND**

THE long awaited visit of The Royal Ballet to Japan took place between 12th April and 15th May. In the past the enormous cost of a Japanese tour has been an insuperable problem but the joint sponsorship of The Japanese Society for International Cultural Exchange, a local newspaper combine Nihon Keizai Shinbun and The Osaka Festival Society together with generous financial aid given by The British Council and a number of British business firms has at last enabled the company to make its debut in Tokyo and Osaka.

The composition of the company was similar to that of the group which visited Australia and New Zealand in 1958 and 1959 and consisted of sixty-seven persons including stage and administrative staff. John Field was Director and Margot Fonteyn and Beryl Grey guest artists: other principals were Anya Linden, Lynn Seymour, Michael Somes, Brian Shaw, Bryan Ashbridge and Desmond Doyle. Emmanuel Young and Kenneth Alwyn were in charge of the musical direction.

The repertoire consisted of the new production of *Giselle, Swan Lake, Sylphides, Patineurs, Checkmate, Fête Etrange, Danses Concertantes* and *Solitaire*. The company opened in Tokyo for two nights 17th and 18th April at the Tokyo Metropolitan Festival Hall. They then played for five days 20th to 24th April at the Bunkyo Hall and for a further five days 26th to 30th April at the Takarazuku Theatre. Next came their only appearance outside Tokyo, four performances in Osaka as part of the Osaka Festival. During their stay they gave a total of twenty-six performances. They were accompanied throughout their tour by The Imperial Philharmonic Orchestra whose playing though by no means impeccable never proved an impediment to the dancers and even at times reached quite a high standard of musicianship.

Conditions of working and performing were far from ideal. It was unfortunately unavoidable that the company appeared in three different theatres in Tokyo, only one of which was easily accessible from their living quarters. Happily The International Dance Institute which is reasonably near the city centre was generously made available for classes and the company warmly appreciated the ideal facilities of the studio. The stages of most theatres in Japan are excessively wide but of insufficient depth and only in Tokyo at The Metropolitan Hall are the backstage facilities fully adequate: the auditorium of this hall however is more appropriate for orchestral than for theatrical performances.

All the stage settings were reproduced locally. The tendency of the Japanese when copying a stage design seems to be to produce work of meticulous detail with rather too hard and definite an outline and a certain harshness of colouring. The Benois set for *Sylphides* in reproduction looked like a poor imitation of John Piper's work and Sophie Fedorovich's lovely set for *Fête Etrange* lost most of its poetry through too precise definition of detail. The Second Act of *Swan Lake* acquired a sombre heaviness and Mount Fuji, which is ever present in Japanese painting, seemed to appear in the distance on the backcloth of the Second Act of *Giselle*. The stage lighting equipment was not helpful and in none of the theatres was it possible for technical reasons to provide fully adequate illumination of the stage.

The opening performance on 17th April, *Giselle* in which the leads were taken by Fonteyn and Somes, was attended by a capacity audience including Crown Prince Akihito and Princess Michiko: many international celebrities visiting Tokyo to take part in the East-West Music Encounter, a combined music festival and conference of which this performance was the first public event, were also present.

Giselle was given with Peter Rice's drab and uninspired decor and costumes which are adequate except for the harshly inappropriate brilliance of Bathilda's dress. The expanded version is not entirely satisfactory and requires a little more rethinking particularly in the First Act. Albrecht's initial entry alone from the woodcutter's cottage rather than in company with Wilfred is distinctly odd. The interpolated passages of mime in which Bertha and Hilarion describe the story of the Wilis are near impossible to follow without a programme note. The traditional vintage procession which features in the Leningrad production should have been restored. The peasant pas de deux would present a better stage picture if introduced for the entertainment of the Prince and his court. The departure of the court as Giselle collapses takes place with the indecent haste displayed by eyewitnesses of an accident anxious to avoid police interrogation. The fight between Albrecht and Hilarion is unnecessarily melodramatic in particular Hilarion's action of rolling across the stage when thrown to the ground and Albrecht's gesture of hurling his sword at his rival. The decision of the company to end the Second Act with Albrecht kneeling in grief before Giselle's grave avoids the anticlimax brought about by the final tableau of Albrecht reunited with Bathilda and yet makes the audience realise that Albrecht survives, a fact which is not obvious if he falls to the ground senseless as happened in the Tokyo first night performance. The conclusion of *Giselle* is certainly not a liebestod.

Apart from such criticism of detail the Royal Ballet's version of *Giselle* retains a nostalgic period atmosphere and yet convincingly presents a living dramatic episode, the humans are humans and the wilis are ethereal beings. Fonteyn's performance is beyond criticism: Fonteyn shows her remarkable ability as an actress in her impersonation of the shy, over sensitive peasant girl, and her restrained playing of the mad scene brings a frightening reality to the episode. The simple story of the happy, innocent girl whose heart is broken by the apparent infidelity of her lover became wholly credible. In the Second Act Fonteyn's dancing is of a perfection only rarely experienced—her movements are seemingly effortless, smooth flowing and lyrical. Perhaps the most noteworthy characteristic of her dancing is her profound musical sense. Somes in his solos displayed a slight ponderousness but no other dancer in the company can rival him as a danseur noble in partnership. He plays the ungrateful role of the fairy tale prince with a masculine vigour and partners Fonteyn with complete understanding and discretion. Linden radiates rather too much warmth of personality as the Queen of the Wilis: she fails to communicate, as formerly did Grey, the icy heartlessness of the unpleasant Myrtha. The youthful corps de ballet were seen to best advantage in the peasant dances: in the Second Act they were occasionally erratic in their formations and slovenly in their arm and hand movements. The peasant pas de deux danced by Seymour and Shaw was one of the highlights of the evening, a brilliant display of virtuosity.

Swan Lake the other full length ballet presented by the company was a patchy affair. Grey is a magnificent Odile but her portrayal of Odette is lacking in warmth and poetry—she is physically an eagle not a swan. She and Ashbridge fully deserved the enthusiastic applause which greeted their stylish Third Act pas de deux. The company danced well in the First and Third Acts but in the Second and Fourth Acts the corps de ballet showed the same faults as in the Second Act of *Giselle*. Leslie Hurry's sets and costumes badly need redesigning particularly in the Third Act. Also although there are many obvious objections I prefer the Leningrad Ballet's use of the short tutu for the corps de ballet of swans.

Sylphides was presented on the second night of the tour together with *Danses Concertantes* and *Checkmate*. The British temperament has never seemed to me to be suited to Fokine's masterpiece and though the individual dancing of Grey, Linden and Ashbridge was technically highly proficient, the performance as a whole was no more than routine and never conveyed to the full the dreamy atmosphere of Chopin's music. Here again the corps de ballet lacked discipline in their arm movements and were noticeably inferior to the Leningrad Ballet in this respect.

The interpretation of *Danses Concertantes*, which requires fine orchestral playing, was inevitably hampered by the orchestra's inability to perform Stravinsky's difficult score with the necessary precision. Macmillan's choreography, which smacks of the circus, is witty but over fussy especially with regard to the hand movements. It contains many very effective groupings and group dances. Doreen Wells, Audrey Farris and Phyllis Spira were delightfully gamin and sparkling while Britton and Doyle displayed considerable athletic ability. This ballet is clever but not quite clever enough: the decor too is attractive. I particularly liked the design of the tutus which bounce and shimmer.

The initial impression given by *Checkmate* is overwhelming: a second and third

Continued on page 20

Irina Kolpakova and Vladilen Semenov entertain "Les Petits Rats" of the Paris Opéra, who took part in the Leningrad Ballet's performance of *The Sleeping Beauty*.

NEWS FROM PARIS

THE KIROV BALLET

The ballet company of the Leningrad State Kirov Ballet opened on 16th May in the Paris Opéra.

The repertoire was *The Sleeping Beauty*, a programme made up of fragments of ballets and separate items, and *The Stone Flower*. They made an excellent impression in Paris and had great success. What stood out was the musicality which inspires the dancers. With them, nothing is hurried. There is no faking, and what is remarkable is that both with the corps de ballet and with each individual dancer slow movements are very beautiful, and movements are no less impressive when they are speeded up—for they never become forced.

The whole company, formed particularly of young dancers, is very beautiful and well disciplined, without stiffness or haste. The group movements are very well produced and give a fine impression of harmony. All the dancers seem to know all the roles, for a dancer who performs one evening the role of the Father of Aurora will the following evening have the principal part in *The Stone Flower*.

The new choreography for *The Sleeping Beauty* by Sergueyev does not break the tradition but is constantly varied and at times ravishing. In the title role Irina Kolpakova was not as brilliant as Xenia Ter-Stepanova, who appeared in one of the performances.

Vladilen Semenov is a handsome Prince, who jumps well and has nobility. But the artist who made the strongest impression in Paris, principally in the important role of the Mistress of the Copper Mountain in *The Stone Flower*, was undoubtedly Alla Osipenko.

When the Stanislavsky company came to Paris some years ago, a young artist stood out; she had long supple and slender limbs and a marvellously expressive technique. She has now returned as a mature artist capable of tackling big roles, such as the Mistress of the Copper Mountain in *The Stone Flower*.

In the second act (The Village Fair), which does not come anywhere near the brightness of *Petrushka*, a remarkable artist emerged: Irina Gensler, who gives a fine dramatic quality to the role of a young gypsy, being strikingly violent and pathetic for a few moments. The role of the Mistress of the Copper Mountain is interpreted by Alla Osipenko with the authority and stage presence of a great star. Fine performances were also given in the other major roles by Alla Sizova (Katerina) and Yuri Soloviev (Danila).

The orchestra was directed by Niazi, and the rapport which he established with the dancers allowed the latter to follow the music and mark the smallest accents of the score.

The long mixed programme included an extract from the ballet *La Bayadère* (Minkus-Petipa), with leading roles danced by Olga Moiseyeva (or Alla Sizova) and Rudolf Nureyev, a male star of high quality.

The Zaporozhian Cossacks, an extract from the ballet *Taras Bulba* (with choreography by Fenster) was danced entirely by men, and was breath-taking.

After its season at the Opéra the Kirov Ballet moves to the Palais des Sports.

I found the Soviet decor and costumes inadequate, from a pictorial point of view. In fact, however, the dancing makes one forget everything, and basically is not this the whole of ballet?

Continued on page 22

ROYAL DANISH BALLET

ERIK BRUHN AND KIRSTEN SIMONE IN *MISS JULIE*

THE DANISH FESTIVAL

GERARD BOURKE

EVEN in the land of Hans Andersen's fairy-tales one cannot become divisible; consequently when visiting the 12th Royal Danish Ballet and Music festival during the last half of May at Copenhagen, I frequently found myself torn between opera and ballet staged on the same evenings at the twin stages of the Royal Theatre —the old being as beautiful as the new (1927) is ugly. This year being committed to explore more fully the six operas on show, I was able to attend only two ballet evenings, so my report must be more fact than fiction, i.e. criticism.

The first comprised Balanchine's *Serenade* which has long been in their repertory and shows off well the company's overall elegance: Mona Vangsaa, Ruth Andersen, Inge Sand and Verner Andersen and Kjeld Noack were the solo quintet. There followed an extended ballet in five scenes *The Shadow,* after Hans Andersen's tale, with choreography by Birger Bartolin and an interesting score by Svend Erik Tarp, the well-known Danish composer. The ballet exploited cleverly, if at rather too great length, the relationship, in artistic ideals, between a learned man and his wayward shadow. Finally a gracious princess is infatuated by the shadow but kills its owner, unkind treatment since he has seen her as the muse of poetry. The part of the shadow was taken proudly by Frank Schaufuss with Jørn Madsen, a greatly improved young dancer since my last visit two years ago, as its owner, and Mona Vangsaa as the princess. The last act of *Napoli,* one of ballet's most exhilarating romps concluded the evening with Erik Bruhn as guest . . . to our delight. Gennaro was Fredbjorn Bjørnsson, with Kirsten Ralov, Teresina.

An interesting new ballet exploring the abstract relationship between choreography and music with some success, entitled *Ballet in D,* began the second evening, choreographed by Lizzie Rode in close co-operation with Ole Schmidt, the composer. Niels Kehlet, another excellent young dancer, who first grew wings as a bluebird, appeared in this work with Jørn Madsen and 21 members of the ballet corps. It was followed, in high relief, by the famous *Don Quixote* pas de deux danced as brilliantly as has ever been the case, one must believe, by Erik Bruhn and Kirsten Simone: the audience electrified by their perfection and joie de vivre—just as Bournonville required of his dancers—rewarded them with as prolonged an ovation as is permitted in the Royal Theatre, a very short one by British standards.

Miss Julie, the modern classic by Birgit Cullberg to music by Ture Rangström, friend of Strindberg, came next with Frank Schaufuss as Jean, a performance deriving more pleasure, at first, from the evening's strange events, than does Kronstam or Bruhn; Mona Vangsaa showed a fine study as the distraught young lady, with a minor gem danced by Mona Kiil as Kristin, the servant astonished by the midsummer madness all around. This programme was completed with *Graduation Ball* which should never be missed in Copenhagen where it is, in my experience, danced best with Lichine's choreography adapted by Niels Bjørn Larsen, who is now again the company's ballet master, having been director of the Tivoli pantomime. The Danes miming ability is here seen clearly as is, indeed, the exceptional good looks of all the dancers.

La Sylphide was danced again this year, of course, and is well known here now after the Rambert presentation and T.V. adaptations. Then there were the Roland Petit ballets *Carmen,* to some of the Bizet score, and *Cyrano de Bergerac* which I was particularly unhappy at missing: a ballet in two acts with music by Marius Constant and décor by Yves Saint Laurent, of Dior fame, it was danced well, I hear, with Kronstam as Cyrano and Kirsten Simone as Roxane. It was in a double bill with a new Roland Petit ballet *La Chaloupée,* mounted specially for the Danes, and danced by Bruhn, Kirsten Ralov and Niels Bjørn Larsen.

A ballet on Dumas's *La Dame aux Camélias* by Kirsten Ralov was also danced, as well as Birgit Cullberg's *Moon Reindeer* which I reviewed here before—linked to Carl Orff's opera *The Wise Maiden*—and Robbins' *Fan-Fare* and Balanchine's *Apollon Musagète* were repeated from former years. *Giselle* was danced, prior to *Graduation Ball* another evening, with Margrethe Schanne as Giselle and Henning Kronstam; these two most poetic dancers must indeed be excellent here. *Night Shadow* was not danced this year.

BALLET IN CAPE TOWN

MARINA GRUT

BRITAIN is well acquainted with South African dancers as individuals, but I doubt that much thought has been given to how they managed to gain proficiency and experience here before coming to Britain.

Many visiting companies or artists do not realise that South African ballet audiences are well acquainted with the classics and have seen them performed by South Africans in productions of exceptionally high standard. Thus audiences here are often disappointed by visiting Companies or artists because they feel that their intelligence has been underrated and that inexperienced dancers are palmed off on them, or programmes of divertissement offered instead of complete ballets. As there is young talent here in abundance, the audiences here would like to see more mature artists—but not those long past their prime—instead of fledgeling ballerinas. Only the best will satisfy the public here now, for what they see of their own dancers is of such high standard that they expect more and more from overseas companies and artists.

The company responsible for setting this high standard of production and performance is called "The University of Cape Town Ballet" (U.C.T. Ballet) and is under the direction of Dulcie Howes. Although their standard is that of a professional Company the members are in fact not paid. The corps de ballet and the soloists come from the ballet school which has children's classes every afternoon, and a students' course, the duration of which is three years, during the morning. The course leads to a teacher's diploma, and as the Company draws its members from the school these students have excellent chances of gaining experience and knowledge of stagecraft and production while getting the chance of performing the classics and modern ballets. This experience inevitably benefits them in their later teaching careers, and is an even greater asset to them if they intend continuing their careers as dancers.

It is this company then, that I should like to discuss here, having seen them again after my absence of several years, in Europe, where I was privileged to see and write about companies in Russia, Denmark and Sweden, as well as visiting companies from other European countries and the U.S.A.

To understand my amazement at seeing how their standard had risen and with what precision the corps danced, it is necessary to emphasize what was mentioned previously, namely that at the end of every year the third-year students leave, and thus at the beginning of each year the producers are faced with the formidable task of re-casting entire ballets and moulding a new set of dancers into a homogenous group. The work is therefore harder than in a more permanent Company but the rewarding result justifies it.

What I particularly appreciate is the zest with which the students throw themselves into their various roles and the understanding they show of them. The credit for this goes largely to David Poole, who has been on the staff since 1959, and whose own enthusiasm seems to have been transferred to the entire Company. The Company has today advanced to a semi-professional status and the principal dancers are paid. At present the company is led by Patricia Miller and David Poole. Many people express surprise at the size of the Company which has 50 - 60 members, of which 16 are men. In the second act of *Casse Noisette* alone, a corps de ballet of 25 is used.

The U.C.T. Ballet is under the continual surveillance of Dulcie Howes who also has a great personal influence on the students during their three years with her company, turning them from awkward fledgelings into elegant young ladies. She has directed the company for 27 years, during which time visiting artists such as Nerina and Rassine have appeared as guest artists. The standard has always been high as is proved by the fact that when such artists came, ballets like *Giselle* could be performed at very short notice, but today the standard is even higher as regards individual performances.

South African dancers have the sun in them and this energy and zest for life is evident in all they do. They carry this with them on their extensive tours of the Union and the Rhodesias, where they have become well known. This year the University Ballet has been invited to Johannesburg to share the season with the South African Federation of Opera in May.

Mary Kenwood reviews the U.C.T. Ballet in Johannesburg on page 21

viewing of the ballet revealed its flaws. Bliss's score is extremely fine and the decor with minor exceptions is impressive. The hooded head dresses of the Castles are merely grotesque and there are moments when the Black Queen seemed to be dressed in the garb of an air hostess. The Black Queen remains one of Grey's finest roles and her dancing of the tango of triumph was exhilarating. She dominated the whole ballet with her powerful interpretation of this inhuman character. The company gave a most spirited and exciting performance and special mention should be made of Doyle (First Red Knight) and Ashbridge (First Black Knight). Perhaps, however, *Checkmate* needs rechoreographing in The Dance of the Pawns, The Ceremony of the Bishops, The Entry of the Red Castles and in The Finale. There are many moments of meaningless movement while the dramatic tension of the work could be tightened by assigning more definite characters to some of the chess pieces especially The Red Queen.

Fête Etrange was an unwise choice for this tour and without a programme note was almost incomprehensible to Japanese audiences. It was seen to great disadvantage not only because of the inaccurate reproduction of the set and dimness of the stage lighting but also because for some inexplicable reason a local singer was not engaged to sing the songs which were consequently performed as violin and oboe obligati. The choreography of this work is of great individuality and is very carefully and beautifully designed and so has stood the test of time well. The Country Boy is a difficult role and perhaps as yet has had only one ideal interpreter, Pirmin Trecu. Britton who danced the part here is not suited by temperament to it being a straightforward athletic dancer. Linden by contrast was an exquisitely lovely Bride and danced with intense poetic feeling. Bennett was a dignified aristocratic but sardonic Bridegroom.

The remaining two ballets presented were similar in character though the older of the two *Patineurs* still remains as fresh and amusing as when it was first performed before the war. *Patineurs* is the perfect opening ballet with sparkling music and witty choreography. Shaw's effortless technical perfection as The Blue Skater was the highlight of this ballet. This however is a work in which The Royal Ballet always shows to greatest advantage and there were noteworthy performances by Seymour and Bennett in the romantic pas de deux, by Wells and Farris as The Girls in Blue and by Elaine Thomas and Valerie Taylor as The Girls in Maroon.

I was disappointed with *Solitaire* of which I have seen a single performance only. It is obviously a dancer's ballet and was well performed because the performers were enjoying themselves. It seemed to me apart from its tenuous story to be an inferior *Facade* with rather folksy music. I cannot see any valid reason for its inclusion in the repertoire other than as a show piece for Seymour.

Apart from Fonteyn, Somes and Grey who have inevitably received the acclamation which they rightly merit, Seymour and Shaw attracted special attention by their dancing in the virtuoso divertisements. Both are dancers of very great polish and consistently graceful lines. I was however disappointed in Seymour's stage presence which I would attribute to her failure to pay sufficient attention to her make-up in defining her features. She and Shaw gave consistently brilliant performances. Shaw is a type of dancer whom I did not see among the Leningrad Company, an athlete whose athleticism and technical skill are so disciplined that they never are obvious: the first variation of the *Giselle* Peasant Pas de Deux, the *Swan Lake* Neapolitan Dance and the Blue Skater's Solo as danced by Shaw are as fine examples of male dancing as one hope to see in any company in the world.

In view of the appearance of the Leningrad Ballet in Japan less than twelve months previously it was unfortunate that the Royal Ballet should repeat three of the works given by the former company. *Giselle* was wholly acceptable as a vehicle for Fonteyn but *Swan Lake* and *Sylphides* should have given place to two of the works which feature only in the Royal Ballet's repertoire. Of the shorter ballets *Checkmate* alone possesses dramatic content: *Fête Etrange* is too sophisticated and subtle a work for the general public in any country: the other four works are all divertissement ballets. British choreography should have been represented by some of the more mature works of Ashton, Macmillan and Cranko. *La Fille Mal Gardée, The House of Birds* and *Pineapple Poll* would have been very acceptable to Japanese audiences. The most popular of the ballets presented apart from the classics were *Checkmate, Patineurs* and *Danses Concertantes.*

The company's visit was warmly welcomed by the Japanese public and despite the high prices of admission most performances were completely sold out. Attendance at the performances was not always good owing to the fact that the big companies purchase blocks of seats and give them away to individuals who fail to make use of them. This has meant that many persons wishing to see performances have been unable to do so although several seats have been unfilled each evening. Local exponents of Western Ballet and the Japanese Dance extended much hospitality to the dancers inviting them to their studios and their homes. The most noteworthy reception was that given by the International Dance Institute when some fifty Japanese dancers assembled to meet the leading members of the company.

CYRIL ELAND

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN BALLET COMPANY IN JOHANNESBURG

IT is seldom we, in Johannesburg, have a chance to see South Africa's oldest and best known ballet company, that of the University of Cape Town. However, early in May, during the short season given by the recently formed South African Federation for Opera at the Empire Theatre, a total of six performances were given by this company. Now that we have had our appetites whetted by these splendid dancers, it is to be hoped that they will later be able to come here for a season of their own, rather than as the poor relation of the opera. Judging from the packed houses and enthusiastic reception they received, they should have a most successful season.

Two programmes were given, the first being the full length *Casse Noisette*, and the second three short ballets, *Les Patineurs, Blood Wedding* and *Pineapple Poll.*

Pride of place must be given to the outstanding production of the *Nutcracker.* This comparatively new version was given its première in Cape Town in December 1959. Both production and choreography (with the exception of the Grand Pas de Deux, Sugar Plum variation and Chinese dance from Act III, which have been retained from the original) are by David Poole, with decor and costumes by Eleanor Esmond-White. Throughout the choreography is both original and effective, and Eleanor Esmond-White's designs are tasteful and attractive. I particularly liked those of the adult guests in the first act and the scintillating white ones of the snowflakes and those of the two principals in the second act, with their touches of blue.

The overall excellence of the dancing was evidenced in the many fine solo performances and in the work of the corps (numbering 22) which was seen to its best advantage in the snowflake sequence. Richard Glasstone as Dr. Drosselmeyer displayed the stage presence and qualities of the true character dancer and mime so essential to companies performing full length classical ballets. It is easy to visualise him as a Carabosse, Dr. Coppelius or von Rothbart. Trevor Dodd as the Soldier and Terence Etheridge as King Rat both gave a good account of themselves, and almost without exception the soloists in the last act were very good. I was intrigued by Poole's choreography for the Bon-Bons which was both grotesque and amusing in keeping with the clownish appearance of the performers.

Without doubt, however, Patricia Miller and David Poole as the two principals produced the highlights of the evening. It is difficult to apportion the credit for the brilliant display given by these two. Obviously each is possessed of strong solo technique, but it is in their double work that they scintillate. The combination of Poole's exciting choreography (no doubt specially designed to exhibit their best points) and the opportunity they have had of working together for long periods in a permanent company must all have contributed to the magnificent final result. For me the biggest thrill of the evening came in the Act II pas de deux. The breathtaking lifts and perfection of timing, all accomplished apparently with the greatest of ease, are something I had previously believed were confined to the Russians. At the final curtain we had another example of this astonishing co-ordination, control and strength when with one smooth swift motion the ballerina was suddenly sitting perched high in the air on her partner's raised hand, neither meanwhile showing the slightest sign of strain. I have seldom seen two dancers more perfectly in accord.

In the second programme the three short ballets chosen were ideal for displaying the achievements and talent of this young company. *Les Patineurs* is always popular, and is especially good as an opening item. Terence Etheridge in the virtuoso role of the Blue Boy (surely a very young one !) tackled the difficulties with an enthusiasm and enjoyment which compensated for any technical shortcomings. Margaret Duckitt and Chris van Niekerk in the pas de deux created just the right romantic atmosphere, the former having something of the lightness and delicacy of the early Shearer. Janice Illingworth and Dominique Bouchet were also excellent as the Blue Skaters, the multiple fouettes being exceptionally well performed.

I was not happy, however, about the casting of Patricia Miller as the Bride in *Blood Wedding.* Her slight, fair physique, so perfect in classical ballet and the lighter character roles in which she excels, did not suit this full-blooded passionate role, in which my ideal is the dynamic Ann Heaton. David Poole, however, was a broodingly powerful Leonardo, against which Chris van Nieker's Bridegroom, although finely danced, seemed a little lightweight. I prefer this company's contrast of a female Death with the male Moon, to the male Death at Covent Garden. Anlenor Heize impressed in this role.

The evening concluded with a thorougly delightful performance of Alfred Rodrigues' *Pineapple Poll.* Here Patricia Miller's pert and vivacious Poll was a joy, and Basil Poole made a handsome and gallant Captain, while David Poole's Jasper was a most sympathetic simpleton. The whole cast obviously enjoyed this rollicking ballet and gave of their best, particularly good work being done by Pamela Chrimes as Mrs. Dimple.

Having so thoroughly enjoyed these two performances by the University of Cape Town Ballet, I can only envy my new colleague in Cape Town, Marina Grut, who will have more opportunity to study the progress of the company as a whole and its members in particular. Currently, as I write, there is interesting news of Avril Bergengren, who was a leading member of the company when it was featured in this magazine in September 1959, and who is now in London. As she had been in England for only seven months she did not have a British passport and so could not accept nomination for the competition to select Britain's entrant for the International Ballet Competition to be held later in Rio de Janeiro. She was therefore given special leave by Ursula Moreton to fly the 12,000 mile round trip to Johannesburg to compete for the coveted chance of representing South Africa. She has now been selected for this honour thus justifying her long journey and the obvious faith of Ursula Moreton. This is yet another feather in the cap of the indomitable Dulcie Howes, to whose wisdom, enthusiasm and devotion South Africa owes the existence of this virile young company, of which we may well be proud.

MARY KENWOOD

NEWS *(Continued from page 5)*

Munich :

Rosen's ballet *La Buffonata* has been filmed for TV. Sonia Arova is to do Eurydice in Rosen's ballet *The Tragedy of Orpheus.*

The Opera Company performed at the end of May during the Barock Festival in Bayreuth. The programme consisted of *Pieces Brillantes* (Briansky), *Still Point* (Bolender) and *Gala Performance* (Tudor).

Erik Bruhn after all danced during the Munich Ballet Week in June.

The scheduled trip to India by the Munich Opera Ballet has been postponed indefinitely.

Mannheim :

Heino Heiden premiéred on 3rd June the following ballet numbers: *Straussiana* (Joh. and Joseph Strauss), *Peasant Pas de Deux* (Adam), *Der Sonntagszauber* (Ibère), *Valse Noble et Sentimental* (Ravel) and *Jazz Concerto* (Liebermann).

THE KIROV SEASON *(Continued from page 7)*

danced with fine gusto. The boy took small account of the threats of an enormous ogre in a bloated mask (well acted by Takhir Baltachayev, ballet master of the company).

The lighting of this production was on the whole very much better than that of *The Stone Flower*—which was in fact lamentable, giving painful clarity to all those things which should have been veiled in mystery (such as Severian's ludicrous disappearance through a downstage trap). Possibly because the Kirov's stage director (Viacheslav Kivalenko) had learned from his experience with *The Stone Flower* that some of the Royal Opera House's lighting equipment is awkwardly sited, he did the right thing in *The Sleeping Beauty*—that is, adapted his lighting plot to produce something effective in its own way, using the R.O.H. resources to good advantage. Generally speaking, the dancers were lit brightly from the side, without light falling on the dull scenery. This was an excellent idea, for in general the scenery was very dull and the costumes rather good: in fact the contrast between the two was so great that it was hard to believe they were the work of the same designer (Simon Virsaladze). For the most part the backcloths and legs were painted in colours such as beige, khaki, and brown which are depressing in themselves and kill any colours put in front of them. Fortunately the costumes were so satisfying—excellent in cut and flowing well with dance-movements—that they made it possible to forget the scenery.

FERNAU HALL

THE REMAINDER OF THE KIROV SEASON WILL BE REVIEWED IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

THE THEATRE DES NATIONS

THE Théâtre des Nations became the balletic centre of Paris during the season: there was nothing new elsewhere. The Berlin Opera began the season at the beginning of April, performing three ballets by Tatiana Gsovsky. The first, *Paean,* with electronic music by Rémi Gassman, shows the psychological and sexual maladjustments suffered by a young man after a disappointing experience with a woman. This ballet, in which the theme was treated in a dry and brutal manner, did not please or impress the public.

The other ballets were *Romeo and Juliet* (to music by Prokofiev) and *Hamlet* (to music by Boris Blacher, a composer whose work is very interesting). The choreography showed each tiny detail of the two tragedies : everything is there, everything is real, everything is explained. But the public likes to see dancing.

Against very simple scenery, Yvette Chauviré was a very moving Juliet. Her partner, the German dancer Gert Reinholm, has great beauty of line and tries very seriously to rise to the level of his partner. Passionate and lyrical, Gert Reinholm is one of the most gifted of the younger generation of German dancers, trained after the War in a period which saw the return of Germany to classicism. The entire ballet company of the Berlin Opera (28 artists) worked very hard to interpret the dance dramas of Tatiana Gsovsky.

The Théâtre des Nations showed a series of groups performing theatricalized folk dances, and presenting shows which were interesting in different ways. It was not a question of pure folk-dances, for civilisation is penetrating even the most remote parts of the jungle, and with it comes a choreographer or maître de ballet who forms a local group and tries to adapt the folk dances of the country to the stage, working up a show with scenery, costumes etc. Pure folk-dances interest specially the ethnologist, but things are different when the folk-dances come on the stage.

All the folk-dance groups shown in Paris by the Théâtre des Nations try to give a certain artistic status to their shows : essential features of local dances are retained, but there is a certain amount of adaption.

The Cuban People's Ballet of the Cuban National Theatre, directed by the choreographer Ramiro Guerra, presented a very lively show dominated by obsessive Afro-Cuban rhythms. Various influences could be detected ; African, Spanish, with elements of flamenco. The intermingling of Christianity and African religious rites helped to give unity to the show. Movements characterised by fluidity and nonchalance were danced to Caribbean melodies, and guided by the percussion instruments. African influence was particularly clear in *Rambambaramba,* a kind of local carnival, in which Guinean masks and stilt dancers were to be seen. But the humour and the violence, blended with sentiment, made the show truly Cuban. What fascinates one about the compatriots of Fidel Castro is an extremely natural sense of rhythm and an innate theatrical sense that suggests improvisation.

The Lebanese folk troupe " El Anewar ", organised by Victor Moussa, who is also director of the Lebanese Casino, presented an unpretentious show with freshness, charm, and pretty costumes, bringing together pink, red, green and yellow. The music, mainly Turkish in character, might have seemed monotonous in the long run, but the scores of Toufic el Bacha and Zaki Nassif are well orchestrated and well played, thus adding to the enchantment of the show. The company of 50 is homogeneous and well directed. Short acted scenes are very amusing. The show is summed up in a *dakbé* (popular entertainment) with simple rythms and dances which are less febrile than those of the Balkans and less lascivious than Turkish dances. Everything is good humoured, with actor-dancers who have a natural theatrical sense and seem to take pleasure in playing comedy.

The island of Madagascar is now independent, and its inhabitants have formed their own folk-dance troupe " Ravinala ", taking its name from its principal dancer, singer, producer and artistic director. Monsieur Ravinala shows us the various customs which accompany the Madagascans from the cradle to the grave : the delightful costumes, the songs and the dances—or rather certain dance-steps, sometimes a little slow, but in which from time to time the warrior tribes let themselves go in frenzied antics.

But the most astonishing show up to now was that of the National Folk Ballet of Mexico, with Amalia Hernandez as director-general, presented under the auspices of the National Institute for Fine Arts of Mexico. This is undoubtedly the most colourful, successful and sensational of all those seen so far. Cries of admiration greeted the scenes which followed each other in rapid succession, with costumes in admirable colours, some being inspired by ancient Aztec or Mayan artefacts. In Mexico, as in some other countries of Latin America, there are two civilisations : that of pre-conquest times and that dating from after the conquest. For this reason one finds in the dance-rituals a curious mixture of paganism and Christianity. The music, played on violins, trumpets, drums, harps and marracas, is exuberant, passing in a moment from extreme gaiety to melancholy and romantic tenderness.

This show was at once engaged to perform for a month at the Théâtre de Chaillot after its appearance which filled the theatre used by the Théâtre des Nations.

The Peruvian folk-dance group appeared with the Théâtre des Nations without making a very favourable impression. There was nothing memorable in this show, with choreography based on German modern dance, and some scenes that were quite ludicrous. There was nothing Peruvian about the show but the costumes.

As for the dancers from Niger, appearing in the same theatre, they performed in a show which was not ballet at all, but rather a succession of scenes (sometimes violent), arriving directly from the African jungle with their mystery and their magic, but which remained rather remote from us.

There is a thrill to be had in watching these black warriors eat fire and pass swords over their eyes and across their chests, and some interest in the naïve legend of the cruel king Kabrin Kabra ; the fights of the Sahara Touareg were impressive.

FERDINAND REYNA

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RECORD GUIDE

Till Eulenspiegel

This tone poem of Richard Strauss' has caught the imagination of many a choreographer. Nijinsky and Babilée both used this work, though the latter's essay, in spite of the praise it received, I am afraid I found rather obvious in its approach. Mona Inglesby used it with other of this composer's works, including *Death and Transfiguration,* for her masque, *Everyman.* The Decca recording, SXL2261, of these two works together with *The Dance of the Seven Veils* is certainly something to be reckoned with. The V.P.O's playing is superb and Karajan seems to get right into the heart of the effect for which Strauss was striving. This is particularly so in *Death and Transfiguration* which I can recommend without the slightest reserve. It shows to perfection the clarity of the texture and the increased enjoyment that stereo can give (mono LXT5620).

Company at the Manor

Here again is Yehudi and Hephzibar Menuhins' performance of Beethoven's *Spring Sonata,* HMV. ASD389, which awakened within Kurt Jooss his simple but charming little ballet, *Company at the Manor.* However this time, it is the stereo version with the same coupling, the *Kreutzer Sonata.* In the December 1959 issue of Ballet Today, I recommended the mono, ALP1739, albeit briefly, and listening to the new disc has not altered my opinion of its excellence. As you may suspect, the illusion of depth, perspective and real life is something that I assure you is worth while scraping together sufficient of one's hard earned money, to launch into this new world from which one has no desire to return.

Fall River Legend

Few of us will forget this intense ballet for which Morton Gould specially composed the music in full collaboration with Agnes de Mille, the choreographer. Nora Kaye was outstanding as Lizzie Borden, as she always is when the role demands a dramatic actress. At the theatre, the music fits the situations so naturally, though I doubt if anyone, who did not know the story and ballet, would appreciate the tense and almost gruesome details. By and large it is light, jazzy and at times pretty well happy-go-lucky ! Howard Hanson and the Eastman-Rochester Orchestra give as fine a performance as one could wish for on this excellently recorded disc, Mercury AMS16080, the reverse side being the same composer's *Spirituals.* These are considered as some of Gould's best works and the effect of stereo pays dividends (mono MMA11133).

Medusa

Choreographers for Tchaikovsky's *Sixth Symphony* ? Yes, in plenty ! Fokine's *Medusa,* Lifar's and Dimitri Parlic's *L'Amour et Son Destin,* and Keith Lester's ballet for *Where the Rainbow Ends* at the Royal Festival Hall in 1955, immediately come to mind. The last reminds one perhaps a little sadly of the loss to us and ballet of Violetta Elvin, but only selfishly as she, herself, is happy. There are some twenty-seven recordings of this symphony from which to choose—a bit bewildering for many of us but the thousands of admirers of Carlo Maria Giulini will have no hesitation over his recent performance on Columbia SAX2368, with the Philharmonia. As young as he is, he has that quality, born of greatness, which you cannot help but admire whatever your individual taste may be, and here surely you will agree with the richness, tension and contrast of his interpretation. Again I must stress the comparative superiority of stereo (mono 33CX1716).

Passions

And now another version of Cesar Franck's *Symphony in D minor,* the first movement of which Lifar set to his ballet, *Passions,* originally for his Nouveau Ballet de Monte Carlo and later the Paris Opera. Silvestri, conducting the Philharmonia, has a formidable hurdle to clear in the form of Sir Thomas Beecham and in my opinion he falls far short. Beecham's immaculate phrasing, his lyrical and apparently spiritual approach put him head and shoulders above all comers. Silvestri leans to the dramatic side and in general is most successful but I feel you must be a very ardent fan of his to give preference to this new disc. I am speaking of course of the mono version, HMV. ALP1831, as there is no stereo of Beecham's at least so far, and I am content to wait a while to see if it is forthcoming even though Silvestri's, ASD408, is good.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

The article on Olga Ferri in the May issue of *Ballet Today* mentioned my ballet *Señor de Mañara.* To avoid any further confusion between my good friend Alan Carter, former ballet-master at Munich, and me, I would point out that Mdme Ferri created the strong dramatic role of "La Duchesse" in *Señor de Mañara* opposite Milorad Miskovitch in Paris for the Enghien Festival of 1959, and although it has since been performed in a number of European countries and in South America, it has not yet, to the best of my knowledge, been performed in Munich.

Jack Carter

Dear Editor,

The news of the tragic death of Maria Fris in Hamburg came as a great shock to both Paula Hinton and myself. As you will recall, Fris danced under my direction at the Opera House in Frankfurt-Main for two years, '57-'59 and although our professional relations at times were not of the easiest, it is none the less quite dreadful to read of such a wasteful and so terrifying end to a dancer who had it in her to have achieved much *much* more than she alas did achieve.

She had a large following in Germany which will mourn her for many a day, and my wife and I would like to join them and her German ballet colleagues in wishing rest to her spirit.

Walter Gore and Paula Hinton

Extracts from my postbag

The School of British Guiana Ballet write that they are in need of books, magazines, films, photographs, brochures, etc., relating to dancing, "to help create the only dance library within a thousand miles".

Editor's note—Copies of *Ballet Today* have been despatched, anyone with a surplus of other matter please send to 294, Murray Street, Georgetown.

Fred Fehl, a New Yorker, in association with a business firm in America is publishing notepaper with a photograph of Alicia Markova and Erik Bruhn in *Les Sylphides* (with the American Ballet Theatre).

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Dear Mrs. Herf,

"Like many others, I consider Mr. Hall the fairest and most encouraging Ballet critic in London, a commendable contrast to one or two others who seem to relish throwing prejudiced unjustified brickbats at worthy performers—instead of bouquets in appreciation of merit. As a regular subscriber to *Ballet Today* I congratulate you on developing it to its present high standard."

John Wood, London

Dear Editor,

In reference to *London Reviews* by Mr. Fernau Hall in an article on "Luisillo and his Spanish Dance Theatre" from your May issue 1961, there are one or two things I would like to point out which are not correct.

Firstly, in *Trigales de Trebujena* Mr. Hall mentions the characteristic Farruca steps danced by Luisillo. The actual dance performed is definitely not a Farruca, it is a "Cante de Trilla" which is danced to the accompaniment of a singer and is quite a different thing altogether. A Farruca rhythm is in 2/4 and the latter is in 3/4, also a Farruca is usually never danced to a song. Secondly, in the same ballet, Luisillo is described as a gypsy which he is not portraying in this role. He is a rider in the typical costume worn by riders in Andalucia. A gypsy would not be seen in a costume such as this.

The other point I wish to make clear is that also in Mr. Hall's article he refers to the comic Bulerias danced by Pablo Cañas in the Cuadro Flamenco. This is not a Bulerias, it is a Mirabra, and the Zapateado (spelt with a capital Z, as written by Mr. Hall), is not a Zapateado but an Alegrias, which even an amateur in Flamenco dancing could recognise.

Cecilia Santos

Fernau Hall writes :

Here we have a fascinating example of the kind of controversy surrounding the extremely complex and fluid subject of Flamenco terminology. Very regrettably, Luisillo avoided giving information in the programmes about the Flamenco items, and so left the way clear for any amount of argument.

I cannot understand why Cecilia Santos raises the matter of the "Farruca" at all, since we are both agreed that what Luisillo did was *not* a Farruca. In the same way she takes me to task for describing Luisillo as portraying a gypsy, when in fact I did nothing of the kind: I wrote of the gypsy arrogance characteristic of Flamenco—a very different matter.

Of course I realized that what I called a Zapateado was danced to Alegrías rhythm, which (as Cecilia Santos rightly says) any amateur can recognize: when I trained in Flamenco, Alegrías was the first thing I learned. But Luisillo did *not* dance an Alegrías to this music: he did a dance with the whole emphasis on footwork, which I was justified in calling a Zapateado (literally "boot-dance"). I doubt if Cecilia Santos would agree; the fact is that the exact meanings of the terms used for pure footwork (escobilla, taconeo, zapateado) are very controversial.

I am happy to accept her correction over the Mirabra.

It is interesting that the terminology of Kathak (the North Indian cousin of Flamenco) is equally confused, and for the same reason: each teacher is a law unto himself. So in both cases we find different words applied to the same thing, and one word applied to different things.

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COLOGNE

by **DR. WILFRIED HOFMANN**

Left : CARMEN PANADER.

The Milloss Era

WHEN old opera houses burn down, it is usually more than a theatre hall that is lost. Too often, a certain " genius loci " was linked to some old stage doors and plush stalls. On the other hand, the building of a new opera house can provide chances for a fresh spirit to rise: This is the story of the Cologne Opera—a magnificent new construction built four years ago—which may have opened a new road to ballet.

While the Modern tradition (Kurt Joos, Alexander v. Swaine and Lisa Czobel, Lisa Kretschmar) lingered on even after World War II, Intendant Professor Oscar F. Schuh two years ago decided to make Cologne a ballet town, and he speedily went about it in a determined way: (1) He called in Aurel de Milloss who organized a new company. (2) He provided the means for the hiring of a group of 36 dancers (17 men), among them an ideally balanced team of capable noble and lyrical, demi-caractère, and caractère soloists: Helga Held (formerly Wuppertal), Tilly Söffing (formerly Augsburg), the Argentinian Carmen Panader (formerly Rome), Winfried Krisch (one of Germany's most outstanding technicians), the Argentinian Hugo Della-valle (formerly Stuttgart) and Lothar Höfgen (of modern background). The group, while consisting of unusually hand-some boys and some pretty girls, is technically still inferior to comparable groups in Germany. (3) He provided the company with excellent working conditions (three ballet class- and rehearsal-rooms ; ballet shoe allowances, etc.). (4) He allowed Milloss to transfer the Krefeld Dance Academy to Cologne where, as of this fall, it is to function as an annex to the opera.

So far, however, the Cologne ballet is still more the product of an Intendant's ambitions and of an extremely hard work-ing group than a fact of which the Cologners have taken proud recognition. Ballet evenings sell less well than the operas, therefore ballet performances are relatively scarce (about one every fortnight). This creates the danger that the dancers will move on to one of those many German opera houses which provide them with more chances to show themselves off on stage although the artistic standard there might be lower.

It is, however, just the artistic standard which makes Cologne another hope in the German ballet world. Aurel de Milloss, it is true, recently having become an Italian citizen, will continue to live and also work in Rome. Nevertheless, his presence in Cologne is not a casual or brief one. Indeed, he devotes equal " seasons " to each city. Under such a system it is possible to avoid the more unpleasant dis-advantages of the " travelling salesman " in choreography, and exploit to greater ad-vantage the opportunity to stage the same ballets twice, thus economizing more than a resident choreographer can insofar as time and artistic resources are concerned. Unfortunately, under the period rehearsal schedule of such a system, the necessary classes are often periodically dropped to give time preference to the visiting choreographer.

The Milloss Repertoire

Milloss' repertoire at present consists of a full evening of modern music ballets: *13 Stühle* (Thirteen Chairs) to Stravinsky's 1923 Concerto for piano and wind instru-ments ; *Wandlungen* to Arnold Schönberg's Variations for Orchestra op. 31 ; *Le Portrait de Don Quichotte* to a commis-sioned score by Goffredo Petrassi, and *L'homme et son Désir* by Darius Milhaud.

Milloss did not wrongly judge the capacity of his audience to take " atonal ", serial, polyrhythmical and polylinear music although a certain type of theatre-goer loudly sighs at such a homogeneous pro-gramme. Milloss' choice is, however, for another reason not fully commendable: The scores he employs necessarily tend to call for a uniform type of choreography—an abrupt, non fluid, restless style, an adaptation of ballet movements to music which forbids essential qualities of these movements: their continuity and " fulfil-ment ". This fact, and Milloss' obviously limited ballet vocabulary: (walking—sup-ported développé—walking—supported ara-besque allongé) cause a certain monotony not present in the scores as such. This result seems unavoidable if—as Milloss does—one attacks this type of music with a basically neo-classical technique.

13 Stühle and *Wandlungen* represent the abstract genre, the former ballet the enter-taining divertissement type, the latter the symphonic ballet type, a ballet of highest abstraction and a product of great intelli-gence. Both ballets are well decorated and costumed ; *13 Stühle* by Liselotte Erler's cubist decors and blue turquoise has a festive but light atmosphere. Winifred Gaul's completely white costumes and black backdrop highlighted with a few smears of red fluorescent paint reflect the supremely intellectual quality of *Wandlungen.*

In either ballet Milloss does not slavishly follow an analysis of the scores, nor does he try to represent the orchestration or structure of Schönberg's variations—a temptation exercised by " scientifically " composed music. As far as rhythms and speed are concerned, however, Milloss follows the scores relentlessly with the result that his soloists have to execute devilishly fast allegros where a filtering, translation or underscoring of rhythms might have helped to arrive at more dance-able and better accented (thus more effec-tive) enchaînements. These trials Winfried Krisch, Hugo Delavalle, Helga Held and Tilly Söffing pass excellently due to their neat and strong technique. Delavalle has become a true danseur noble, a quality which—as he proves—also men of smaller stature can attain. Therefore, he ought not to overstretch himself in an attempt to appear taller, this is more harmful to the illusion of stature than small size itself. The group, on the other hand, is over-demanded by Milloss who in *13 Stühle* lamentably employs enchaînements for his young men who do not excel in virility anyway.

Here as well as in his other works, Milloss likes to work without any exits and entrances. All dancers are at any given moment on stage. Sometimes the presence of surplus dancers is outright disconcert-ing ! In *Wandlungen*, if not dancing, the dancers are grouped in standing or sitting positions like sculptures in a Rococo

HUGO DELAVALLE
in *Wandlungen* by Aurel de Milloss

park. This use of dancers as static counterpoint and plastic decor can be effective and essential to a choreographic pattern. Sometimes, these posted figures, however, do not really add to the dancing. Is it because genuine counterpoint effects *to* dynamic bodies can only be achieved *by* dynamic bodies ?

A truly great and touching work is *Le Portrait de Don Quichotte* first produced by Milloss in 1945 for the memorable Ballets des Champs-Elysées. Milloss does not try to give a scenic account of the Quichotte-episodes. Nor does he treat his subject as an excuse for exotic stage settings and pseudo-spanish dancing. He has rather created a mystery-play in homage to the image of Don Quichotte's character. In doing this, he succeeded better in presenting the self-chosen heroship and self-afflicted agony of Don Quichotte than a 5 act ballet could. It is not clear if the Don Quichotte on stage is the original Don Quichotte, so to speak, or another man who by reading Cervante's book follows Don Quichotte's path like the original hero followed his knights' stories. But this is of no importance since Milloss through a clever scheme has arrived at an ideal unity of time and place: The development of his character takes place within the circle of his servants in his own household. These servants—one as Sancho Pansa—play along with their master's feverish pursuit until he gets out of hand and runs into his own lance. At the end both Don Quichotte and the audience realize that Dulcinea was a sheer vision while Sancho Pansa is an earthly creature—an excellent representation of the story, and an exception to the rule that the ballet is unable to portray psychological facts without the aid of programme notes.

The decors by Afro (black, white, red) are functional, atmospheric and balletic as well. Winfried Krisch (what a jump ! what an arabesque !) in Babilée's role dances superbly a role which is exhausting both physically and emotionally. The ballet's only drawbacks are an unnecessary epilogue which only eases the final tension, and a surplus of all too busy servants on stage.

So much more is it incomprehensible how badly Milloss could fail with his version of Paul Claudel's ballet *L'homme et son Désir* (first produced in Paris in 1921 by the Ballets Suédois). I have hardly ever seen such a fatal conflict of colours and colour intensity between decors and costumes (Joseph Fassbender). One does not imagine a Brazilian jungle but a Carnival populated by creatures from *Nutcracker* Act I in front of a backdrop resembling Peruvian folk art.

Prospects

Milloss has finished rehearsals for five ballets: *Pulcinella, La Valse, Bolero, Renard* and *The Miraculous Mandarin. Pulcinella* and *Bolero* will first be shown in Amsterdam in July during the Holland Festival. For the next season Milloss expects Milko Sparemblek and Maurice Béjart as guest choreographers, and will replace Hugo Delavalle with Ricardo Duse. Delavalle has been engaged by Cranko for the Stuttgart ballet.

DR. WILFRIED HOFMANN

HELGA HELD AND LOTHAR HÖFGEN.

WINFRIED KRISCH IN *PORTRAIT OF DON QUIXOTE.*

Photos in this feature are by Dietmar Dünhöft

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